The Lives of

THE FATHERS, MARTYRS,

and other Principal Saints;

Compiled from

Original Monuments and other Authentic Records.

ILLUSTRATED WITH THE REMARKS OF

Judicious modern Critics and Historians.

BY THE REV.^D ALBAN BUTLER.

Rev. Edw.



JOSEPH SON OF DAVID, fear not to take unto thee MARY THY WIFE.

Mat. Chap. I. Ver. 20.

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MARCH I.

SAINT DAVID, ARCHBISHOP,

PATRON OF WALES.

See his life by Giraldus Cambrensis, in Wharton's Anglia Sacra, t. 2. also Doctor Brown Willis, and Wilkins, Conc. Britan. & Hibern. t. 1.

About the year 544.

ST. DAVID, in Welch Dewid, was son of Xantus, prince of Ceretica, now Cardiganshire. He was brought up in the service of God, and being ordained priest, retired into the Isle of Wight, and embraced an ascetic life, under the direction of Paulinus, a learned and holy man, who had been a disciple of St. Germanus of Auxerre. He is said by the sign of the cross to have restored sight to his master, which he had lost by old age and excessive weeping in prayer. He studied a long time to prepare himself for the functions of the holy ministry. At length, coming out of his solitude, like the Baptist out of the desert, he preached the word of eternal life to the Britons. He built a chapel at Glastenbury, a place which had been consecrated to the divine worship by the first apostles of this island. He founded twelve monasteries, the principal of which was in the vale of Ross,[a] near Menevia, where he formed many great pastors and eminent servants of God. By his rule he obliged all his monks to assiduous manual labour in the spirit of penance: he allowed them the use of no cattle to ease them at their work in tilling the ground. They were never suffered to speak but on occasions of absolute necessity, and they never ceased to pray, at least mentally, during their labour. They returned late

[a] This denomination was given to the valley from the territory where it was situated, which was called Ross. Frequent mention is made of this monastery in the acts of several Irish saints, under the name of Rosnat or Rosnant.

in the day to the monastery, to read, write, and pray. Their food was only bread and vegetables, with a little salt, and they never drank any thing better than a little milk mingled with water. After their repast they spent three hours in prayer and adoration; then took a little rest, rose at cock-crowing, and continued in prayer till they went out to work. Their habit was of the skins of beasts. When any one petitioned to be admitted, he waited ten days at the door, during which time he was tried by harsh words, repeated refusals, and painful labours, that he might learn to die to himself. When he was admitted, he left all his worldly substance behind him, for the monastery never received any thing on the score of admission. All the monks discovered their most secret thoughts and temptations to their abbot.

The Pelagian heresy springing forth a second time in Britain, the bishops, in order to suppress it, held a synod at Brevy in Cardiganshire, in 512, or rather in 519.[1] St. David, being invited to it, went thither, and in that venerable assembly confuted and silenced the infernal monster by his eloquence, learning, and miracles. On the spot where this council was held, a church was afterward built called Llan-Devi-Brevi, or the church of St. David near the river Brevi. At the close of the synod, St. Dubritius the archbishop of Caerleon resigned his see to St. David, whose tears and opposition were only to be overcome by the absolute command of the synod; which however allowed him at his request the liberty to transfer his see from Caerleon, then a populous city, to Menevia, now called St. David's, a retired place, formed by nature for solitude, being as it were almost cut off from the rest of the island, though now an intercourse is opened to it from Milford-Haven. Soon after the former synod, another was assembled by St. David at a place called Victoria; in which the acts of the first were confirmed, and several canons added relating to discipline, which were afterward confirmed by the authority of the Roman church; and these two synods were, as it were, the rule and standard of the British churches. As for St. David, Giraldus adds, that he

[1] See Wilkins, Conc. t. 1.

was the great ornament and pattern of his age. He spoke with great force and energy, but his example was more powerful than his eloquence; and he has in all succeeding ages been the glory of the British church. He continued in his last see many years; and having founded several monasteries, and been the spiritual father of many saints, both British and Irish, died about the year 544, in a very advanced age. Saint Kentigern saw his soul borne up by angels into heaven. He was buried in his church of St. Andrew, which hath since taken his name, with the town and the whole diocess. Near the church stand several chapels, formerly resorted to with great devotion: the principal is that of St. Nun, mother of St. David, near which is a beautiful well still frequented by pilgrims. Another chapel is sacred to St. Lily, surnamed Gwas-Dewy, that is, St. David's man; for he was his beloved disciple and companion in his retirement. He is honoured there on the third, and St. Nun, who lived and died the spiritual mother of many religious women, on the second of March. The three first days of March were formerly holy-days in South-Wales in honour of these three saints; at present, only the first is kept a festival throughout all Wales. John of Glastenbury[2] informs us, that in the reign of king Edgar, in the year of Christ 962, the relicks of St. David were translated with great solemnity from the Vale of Ross to Glastenbury, together with a portion of the relicks of Saint Stephen the Protomartyr.

By singing assiduously the divine praises with pure and holy hearts, dead to the world and all inordinate passions, monks are styled angels of the earth. The divine praise is the primary act of the love of God; for a soul enamoured of his adorable goodness and perfections, summons up all her powers to express the complacency she takes in his infinite greatness and bliss, and sounds forth his praises with all her strength. In this entertainment she feels an insatiable delight and sweetness, and with longing desires aspires after that bliss in which she will love and praise without intermis-

[2] In his history of Glastenbury, p. 130, published by Mr. Thomas Hearne, in 1726.

sion or impediment. By each act of divine praise, the fervour of charity and its habit, and with it every spiritual good and every rich treasure, is increased in her: moreover, God in return heaps upon her the choicest blessings of his grace. Therefore, though the acts of divine praise seem directly to be no more than a tribute or homage of our affections which we tender to God, the highest advantages accrue from these exercises to our souls. St. Stephen of Grandmont was once asked by a disciple, why we are so frequently exhorted in the scriptures to bless and praise God, who, being infinite, can receive no increase from our homages. To which the saint replied; "A man who blesses and praises God receives from "thence the highest advantage imaginable; for God in return "bestows on him all his blessings, and for every word that "he repeats in these acts, says: 'For the praises and bless-"ings which you offer me, I bestow my blessings on you; "what you present to me returns to yourself with an increase "which becomes my liberality and greatness.' It is the di-"vine grace, (goes on this holy doctor,) which first excites a "man to praise God, and he only returns to God his own "gift: yet by his continually blessing God, the Lord pours "forth his divine blessings upon him, which are so many new "increases of charity in his soul."[3]

ST. SWIDBERT, OR SWIBERT, THE ANCIENT, B. C.

He was an English monk, educated near the borders of Scotland, and lived some time under the direction of the holy priest and monk St. Egbert, whom he accompanied into Ireland. St. Egbert was hindered himself from passing into Lower Germany, according to his zealous desire, to preach the gospel to the infidels: and Wigbert, who first went into Friesland upon that errand, was thwarted in all his undertakings by Radbod, prince of that country, and returned home without success. St. Egbert, burning with an insatiable zeal for the conversion of those souls, which he ceased not with many tears to commend to God, stirred up others to

[3] Maximes de S. Etienne de Grandmont, ch. 105. p. 228. Item l. Sententiarum S. Stephani Grand. c. 105. p. 103.

undertake that mission. St. Swidbert was one of the twelve missionaries, who having St. Willibrord at their head, sailed into Friesland, in 690, according to the direction of St. Egbert. They landed at the mouth of the Rhine, as Alcuin assures us, and travelled as high as Utrecht, where they began to announce to the people the great truths of eternal life. Pepin of Herstal, mayor of the French palace, had conquered part of Friesland eighteen months before, and compelled Radbod, who remained sovereign in the northern part, to pay an annual tribute. The former was a great protector and benefactor to these missionaries, nor did the latter oppose their preaching. St. Swidbert laboured chiefly in Hither Friesland, which comprised the southern part of Holland, the northern part of Brabant, and the countries of Gueldres and Cleves: for in the middle age, Friesland was extended from the mouths of the Meuse and the Rhine, as far as Denmark and ancient Saxony. An incredible number of souls was drawn out of the sink of idolatry, and the most shameful vices, by the zeal of St. Swidbert. St. Willibrord was ordained archbishop of Utrecht by pope Sergius I. at Rome, in 696. St. Swidbert was pressed by his numerous flock of converts, and by his fellow-labourers, to receive the episcopal consecration: for this purpose he returned to England soon after the year 697, where he was consecrated regionary bishop to preach the gospel to infidels, without being attached to any see, by Wilfrid, bishop of York, who happened to be then banished from his own see, and employed in preaching the faith in Mercia. Either the see of Canterbury was still vacant after the death of St. Theodorus, or Brithwald his successor was otherwise hindered from performing that ceremony, and St. Swidbert had probably been formerly known personally to St. Wilfrid, being both from the same kingdom of Northumberland. Our saint, invested with that sacred character, returned to his flock, and settled the churches which he had founded in good order: then leaving them to the care of St. Willibrord and his ten companions, he penetrated farther into the country, and converted to the faith a considerable part of the Boructuarians, who inhabited the countries now called the dutchy of Berg, and the county of La Marck. His apostolic labours

were obstructed by an invasion of the Saxons, who, after horrible devastations, made themselves masters of the whole country of the Boructuarians. St. Swidbert, being at length desirous to prepare himself for his last hour, in retirement, by fervent works of penance, received of Pepin of Herstal the gift of a small island, formed by different channels of the Rhine, and another river, called Keiserswerdt, that is, island of the Emperor; werdt, in the language of that country, signifying an island. Here the saint built a great monastery, which flourished for many ages, till it was converted into a collegiate church of secular canons. A town, which was formed round this monastery, bore long the name of Saint Swidbert's Isle, but is now called by the old name Keiserswerdt, and is fortified: it is situated on the Rhine, six miles below Dusseldorp: a channel of the Rhine having changed its course, the place is no longer an island. St. Swidbert here died in peace on the first of March, in 713. His feast was kept with great solemnity in Holland and other parts where he had preached. Henschenius has given us a panegyric on him, preached on this day by Radbod, bishop of Utrecht, who died in 917. His relicks were found in 1626 at Keiserswerdt, in a silver shrine, together with those of St. Willeic, likewise an Englishman, his successor in the government of this abbey; and are still venerated in the same place, except some small portions given to other churches by the archbishop of Cologne.[a] See Bede, hist. l. 5. c. 10. 12. and the historical collection of Henschenius, 1. Mart. p. 84. Fleury, l. 40.

[a] The acts of St. Swidbert, under the name of Marcellinus, pretended to be St. Marchelm, a disciple or colleague of the saint, extant in Surius, are a notorious piece of forgery of the fifteenth century. We must not, with these false acts and many others, confound St. Swidbert of Keiserswerdt with a younger saint of the same name, also an Englishman, first bishop of Verden or Ferden in Westphaly, in 807, in the reign of Charlemagne; whose body was taken up at Verden, together with those of seven bishops his successors, in 1630. Saint Swidbert the younger is mentioned in some martyrologies on the thirtieth of April, though many moderns have confounded him with our saint. Another holy man called Swidbert, forty years younger than our saint, whom some have also mistaken for the same with him, is mentioned by Bede, (l. 4. c. 32.) and was abbot of a monastery in Cumberland upon the river Dacore, which does not appear to have been standing since the conquest. See Leland, Collect. t. 2. p. 152. and Camden's Britannia, by Gibson, col. 831. Tanner's Notitia Mon. p. 73

Batavia Sacra; and the Roman Martyrology, in which his name occurs on this day. His successor, St. Willeic, is commemorated on the second of March, by Wilson in his English Martyrology in the first edition, an. 1608, (though omitted in the second Edition, an. 1628) and is mentioned among the English saints, by F. Edward Maihew, Trophæa Congregationis Anglicanæ Bened. Rhemis, 1625; and F. Jerom Porter, in his Flores Sanctorum Angliæ, Scotiæ, et Hiberniæ. Duaci, 1632.

ST. ALBINUS, BISHOP OF ANGERS, C.

He was of an ancient and noble family in Britanny,[a] and from his childhood was fervent in every exercise of piety. He ardently sighed after the happiness which a devout soul finds in being perfectly disengaged from all earthly things. Having embraced the monastic state at Cincillac, called afterward Tintillant, a place somewhere near Angers, he shone a perfect model of virtue, especially of prayer, watching, universal mortification of the senses, and obedience, living as if in all things he had been without any will of his own, and his soul seemed so perfectly governed by the spirit of Christ as to live only for him. At the age of thirty-five years he was chosen abbot, in 504, and twenty-five years afterward, bishop of Angers. He every where restored discipline, being inflamed with an holy zeal for the honour of God. His dignity seemed to make no alteration either in his mortifications, or in the constant recollection of his soul. Honoured by all the world, even by kings, he was never affected with vanity. Powerful in works and miracles, he looked upon himself as the most unworthy and most unprofitable among the servants of God, and had no other ambition than to appear such in the eyes of others, as he was in those of his own humility. By his courage in maintaining the law of God and the canons of the church, he shewed that true greatness of soul is founded

[a] It is proved by Leland in his Itinerary, published by Hearne, (t. 3. p. 4.) that the ancestors of St. Albinus of Angers came from Great Britain, and that two branches of his family flourished long after, the one in Cornwall, the other in Somersetshire.

in the most sincere humility. In the third council of Orleans, in 538, he procured the thirtieth canon of the council of Epaone to be revived, by which those are declared excommunicated who presume to contract incestuous marriages in the first or second degree of consanguinity or affinity. He died on the first of March in 549. His relicks were taken up and enshrined by St. Germanus of Paris, and a council of bishops, with Eutropius the saint's successor, at Angers, in 556; and the most considerable part still remains in the church of the famous abbey of St. Albinus at Angers, built upon the spot where he was buried, by king Childebert, a little before his relicks were enshrined. Many churches in France, and several monasteries and villages, bear his name. He was honoured by many miracles both in his life-time and after his death. Several are related in his life written by Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers, who came to Angers to celebrate his festival seven years after his decease; also by St. Gregory of Tours, (l. de Glor. Confess. c. 96.) See the notes of Henschenius on his life.

ST. MONAN, IN SCOTLAND, M.

St. Adrian, bishop of St. Andrew's, trained up this holy man from his childhood, and when he had ordained him priest, and long employed him in the service of his own church, sent him to preach the gospel in the isle of May, lying in the bay of Forth. The saint exterminated superstition and many other crimes and abuses, and having settled the churches of that island in good order, passed into the county of Fife, and was there martyred; being slain with above 6000 other Christians, by an army of infidels who ravaged that country in 874. His relicks were held in great veneration at Innerny in Fifeshire, the place of his martyrdom, and were famous for miracles. King David II. having himself experienced the effect of his powerful intercession with God, rebuilt his church at Innerny of stone, in a stately manner, and founded a college of canons to serve it. See King's calendar, and the manuscript life of this martyr in the Scotish college at Paris, and the Breviary of Aberdeen.

MARCH II.

MARTYRS UNDER THE LOMBARDS.

From St. Gregory, Dial. l. 3. c. 26, 27. t. 2. p. 337.

Sixth Age.

THE Lombards, a barbarous idolatrous nation which swarmed out of Scandinavia and Pomerania, settled first in the countries now called Austria and Bavaria; and a few years after, about the middle of the sixth century, broke into the north of Italy. In their ravages about the year 597, they attempted to compel forty husbandmen, whom they had made captives, to eat meats which had been offered to idols. The faithful servants of Christ constantly refusing to comply, were all massacred. Such meats might, in some circumstances, have been eaten without sin, but not when this was exacted out of a motive of superstition. The same barbarians endeavoured to oblige another company of captives to adore the head of a goat, which was their favourite idol, and about which they walked, singing, and bending their knees before it; but the Christians chose rather to die than purchase their lives by offending God. They are said to have been about four hundred in number.

St. Gregory the Great mentions, that these poor countrymen had prepared themselves for the glorious crown of martyrdom, by lives employed in the exercises of devotion and voluntary penance, and by patience in bearing afflictions; also, that they had the heroic courage to suffer joyfully the most cruel torments and death, rather than offend God by sin, because his love reigned in their hearts. "True love," says St. Peter Chrysologus,[1] "makes a soul courageous and

[1] S. Pet. Chrysol. Serm. 4.

"undaunted; it even finds nothing hard, nothing bitter, "nothing grievous: it braves dangers, smiles at death, con- "quers all things." If we ask our own hearts, if we examine our lives by this test, whether we have yet begun to love God, we shall have reason to be confounded, and to tremble at our remissness and sloth. We suffer much for the world, and we count labour light, that we may attain to the gratification of our avarice, ambition, or other passion in its service; yet we have not fervour to undertake any thing to save our souls, or to crucify our passions. Here penance, watchfulness over ourselves, or the least restraint, seems intolerable. Let us begin sincerely to study to die to ourselves, to disengage our hearts from all inordinate love of creatures, to raise ourselves above the slavery of the senses, above the appetites of the flesh and all temporal interest; and in order to excite ourselves to love God with fervour, let us seriously consider what God, infinite in goodness and in all perfections, and whose love for us is eternal and immense, deserves at our hands; what the joys of heaven are, how much we ought to do for such a bliss, and what Christ has done to purchase it for us, and to testify the excess of his love; also what the martyrs have suffered for his sake, and to attain to the happiness of reigning eternally with him. Let us animate ourselves with their fervour: "Let us love Christ as they did," said St. Jerom to the virgin Eustochium, "and every thing "that now appears difficult, will become easy to us." To find this hidden treasure of divine love we must seek it earnestly; we must sell all things, that is, renounce in spirit all earthly objects; we must dig a deep foundation of sincere humility in the very centre of our nothingness, and must without ceasing beg this most precious of all gifts, crying out to God in the vehement desire of our hearts, Lord, when shall I love thee!

ST. CEADA OR CHAD, B. C.

He was brother to St. Cedd, bishop of London, and the two holy priests Celin and Cymbel, and had his education in the monastery of Lindisfarne, under St. Aidan. For his

greater improvement in sacred letters and divine contemplation he passed into Ireland, and spent a considerable time in the company of St. Egbert, till he was called back by his brother St. Cedd to assist him in settling the monastery of Lestingay, which he had founded in the mountains of the Deiri, that is, the Wolds of Yorkshire. St. Cedd being made bishop of London, or of the East Saxons, left to him the entire government of this house. Oswi having yielded up Bernicia, or the northern part of his kingdom, to his son Alcfrid, this prince sent St. Wilfrid into France, that he might be consecrated to the bishoprick of the Northumbrian kingdom, or of York; but he staid so long abroad that Oswi himself nominated St. Chad to that dignity, who was ordained by Wini, bishop of Winchester, assisted by two British prelates, in 666. Bede assures us that he zealously devoted himself to all the laborious functions of his charge, visiting his diocess on foot, preaching the gospel, and seeking out the poorest and most abandoned persons to instruct and comfort in the meanest cottages, and in the fields. When St. Theodorus, archbishop of Canterbury, arrived in England, in his general visitation of all the English churches, he adjudged the see of York to St. Wilfrid. St. Chad made him this answer: "If you judge that I have not duly re-"ceived the episcopal ordination, I willingly resign this "charge, having never thought myself worthy of it: but "which, however unworthy, I submitted to undertake in "obedience." The archbishop was charmed with his candour and humility, would not admit his abdication, but supplied certain rites which he judged defective in his ordination: and St. Chad, leaving the see of York, retired to his monastery of Lestingay, but was not suffered to bury himself long in that solitude. Jaruman, bishop of the Mercians, dying, St. Chad was called upon to take upon him the charge of that most extensive diocess.[a] He was the fifth bishop of the Mercians, and first fixed that see at Litchfield, so called from a great number of martyrs slain and buried there under

[a] The first bishop of the Mercians was Diuma a Scot; the second Keollach, of the same nation: the third Trumhere, who had been abbot of Gethling in the kingdom of the Northumbrians: the fourth Jaruman.

Maximianus Herculeus; the name signifying the field of carcasses. Hence this city bears for its arms a landscape, covered with the bodies of martyrs. St. Theodorus considering St. Chad's old age, and the great extent of his diocess, absolutely forbade him to make his visitations on foot, as he used to do at York. When the laborious duties of his charge allowed him to retire, he enjoyed God in solitude with seven or eight monks, whom he had settled in a place near his cathedral. Here he gained new strength and fresh graces for the discharge of his functions; he was so strongly affected with the fear of the divine judgments, that as often as it thundered he went to the church and prayed prostrate all the time the storm continued, in remembrance of the dreadful day in which Christ will come to judge the world. By the bounty of king Wulfere, he founded a monastery at a place called Barrow, in the province of Lindsey, (in the northern part of Lincolnshire, where the foot-steps of the regular life begun by him remained to the time of Bede. Carte conjectures that the foundation of the great monastery of Bardney, in the same province, was begun by him. St. Chad governed his diocess of Litchfield two years and a half, and died in the great pestilence on the second of March, in 673. Bede gives the following relation of his passage. "Among "the eight monks whom he kept with him at Litchfield, "was one Owini, who came with queen Ethelred, commonly "called St. Audry, from the province of the East Angles, "and was her major-domo, and the first officer of her court, "till quitting the world, clad in a mean garment, and carrying an ax and a hatchet in his hand, he went to the monastery of Lestingay, signifying that he came to work, and "not to be idle; which he made good by his behaviour in "the monastic state. This monk declared, that he one day "heard a joyful melody of some persons sweetly singing, "which descended from heaven into the bishop's oratory, "filled the same for about half an hour, then mounted again "to heaven. After this, the bishop opening his window, and "seeing him at his work, bade him call the other seven "brethren, when the eight monks were entered his oratory, he exhorted them to preserve peace, and religiously

" observe the rules of regular discipline; adding, that the " amiable guest who was wont to visit their brethren, had " vouchsafed to come to him that day, and to call him out " of this world. Wherefore he earnestly recommended his " passage to their prayers, and pressed them to prepare for " their own, the hour of which is uncertain, by watching, " prayer, and good works." The bishop fell presently into a languishing distemper, which daily increased, till, on the seventh day, having received the body and blood of our Lord, he departed to bliss, to which he was invited by the happy soul of his brother St. Cedd, and a company of angels with heavenly music. He was buried in the church of St. Mary, in Litchfield; but his body was soon after removed to that of St. Peter, in both places honoured by miraculous cures, as Bede mentions. His relicks were afterward translated into the great church which was built in 1148, under the invocation of the B. Virgin and St. Chad, which is now the cathedral, and they remained there till the change of religion. See Bede, l. 3. c. 28. l. 4. c. 2 and 3.

ST. SIMPLICIUS, POPE, C.

He was the ornament of the Roman clergy under SS. Leo and Hilarius, and succeeded the latter in the pontificate in 497. He was raised by God to comfort and support his church amidst the greatest storms. All the provinces of the Western empire, out of Italy, were fallen into the hands of Barbarians, infected for the greatest part with idolatry or Arianism. The ten last emperors, during twenty years, were rather shadows of power than sovereigns, and in the eighth year of the pontificate of Simplicius, Rome itself fell a prey to foreigners. Salvian, a learned priest of Marseilles in 440, wrote an elegant book On Divine Providence, in which he shews that these calamities were a just chastisement of the sins of the Christians; saying, that if the Goths were perfidious, and the Saxons cruel, they were however both remarkable for their chastity; as the Franks were for humanity, though addicted to lying: and that though these barbarians were impious, they had not so perfect a knowledge of sin,

nor consequently were so criminal as those whom God chastised by them. The disorders of the Roman state paved the way for this revolution. Excessive taxes were levied in the most arbitrary ways. The governors oppressed the people at discretion, and many were obliged to take shelter among the barbarians: for the Bagaudes, Franks, Huns, Vandals, and Goths raised no taxes upon their subjects: on which account nations once conquered by them were afraid of falling again under the Roman yoke, preferring what was called slavery, to the empty name of liberty. Italy, by oppressions and the ravages of barbarians, was left almost a desert without inhabitants; and the imperial armies consisted chiefly of barbarians, hired under the name of auxiliaries, as the Suevi, Alans, Heruli, Goths, and others. These soon saw their masters were in their power. The Heruli demanded one third of the lands of Italy, and, upon refusal, chose for their leader Odoacer, one of the lowest extraction, but a tall, resolute, and intrepid man, then an officer in the guards, and an Arian heretic, who was proclaimed king at Rome in 476. He put to death Orestes, who was regent of the empire, for his son Augustulus, whom the senate had advanced to the imperial throne. The young prince had only reigned eight months, and his great beauty is the only thing mentioned of him. Odoacer spared his life, and appointed him a salary of six thousand pounds of gold, and permitted him to live at full liberty near Naples. Pope Simplicius was wholly taken up in comforting and relieving the afflicted, and in sowing the seeds of the catholic faith among the barbarians.

The East gave his zeal no less employment and concern. Zeno, son and successor to Leo the Thracian, favoured the Eutychians. Basiliscus his admiral, who, on expelling him, usurped the imperial throne in 476, and held it two years, was a most furious stickler for that heresy. Zeno was no Catholic, though not a stanch Eutychian: and having recovered the empire, published, in 482, his famous decree of union, called the Henoticon, which explained the faith ambiguously, neither admitting nor condemning the council of Chalcedon. Peter Cnapheus, (that is, the Dyer) a violent Eutychian, was made by the heretics patriarch of Antioch;

and Peter Mongus, one of the most profligate of men, that of Alexandria. This latter published the Henoticon, but expressly refused to anathematize the council of Chalcedon; on which account the rigid Eutychians separated themselves from his communion, and were called Acephali, or, without a head. Acacius, the patriarch of Constantinople, received the sentence of St. Simplicius against Cnapheus, but supported Mongus against him and the catholic church, promoted the Henoticon, and was a notorious changeling, double dealer, and artful hypocrite, who often made religion serve his own private ends. St. Simplicius at length discovered his artifices, and redoubled his zeal to maintain the holy faith which he saw betrayed on every side, whilst the patriarchal sees of Alexandria and Antioch were occupied by furious wolves, and there was not one catholic king in the whole world. The emperor measured every thing by his passions and human views. St. Simplicius having sat fifteen years, eleven months, and six days, went to receive the reward of his labours, in 483. He was buried in St. Peter's on the second of March. See his letters: also the historians Evagrius, Theophanes, Liberatus, and amongst the moderns, Baronius, Henschenius, Ceillier, t. 15. p. 123.

ST. MARNAN, B. C.

To his holy prayers Aidan, king of the Scots, ascribed a wonderful victory which he gained over Ethelfrid, the Pagan king of the Northumbrian English; and by his councils Eugenius IV. who succeeded his father Aidan in the kingdom soon after this battle, treated all the prisoners with the utmost humanity and generosity, by which they were gained to the Christian faith. The Northumbrian princes Oswald and Oswi were instructed in our holy religion, and grounded in its spirit by St. Marnan, who died in Annandale in the year 620. His head was kept with singular devotion at Moravia, and was carried in processions attended by the whole clan of the Innis's, which from the earliest times was much devoted to this saint. See the Breviary of Aberdeen, Buchanan, l. 5. in Aidano et Eugenio Regibus, and MSS. me-

moirs in the Scotish college at Paris. St. Marnan is titular saint of the church of Aberkerdure upon the river Duvern, formerly much frequented out of devotion to his relicks kept there.

ST. CHARLES THE GOOD, EARL OF FLANDERS, M.

He was son of St. Canutus king of Denmark, and of Alice of Flanders, who, after the death of his father, carried him then an infant into Flanders, in 1086. His cousin-german Baldwin the seventh, earl of Flanders, dying without issue in 1119, left him his heir by will, on account of his extraordinary valour and merit. The young earl was a perfect model of all virtues, especially devotion, charity, and humility. Among his friends and courtiers, he loved those best who admonished him of his faults the most freely. He frequently exhausted his treasury on the poor, and often gave the clothes off his back to be sold for their relief. He served them with his own hands, and distributed clothes and bread to them in all places where he came. It was observed that in Ipres he gave away, in one day, no less than seven thousand eight hundred loaves. He took care for their sake to keep the price of corn and provisions always low, and he made wholesome laws to protect them from the oppressions of the great. This exasperated Bertulf, who had tyrannically usurped the provostship of St. Donatian's in Bruges, to which dignity was annexed the chancellorship of Flanders, and his wicked relations the great oppressors of their country. In this horrible conspiracy they were joined by Erembald, castellan or chief magistrate of the territory of Bruges, with his five sons, provoked against their sovereign because he had repressed their unjust violences against the noble family De Straten. The holy earl went every morning barefoot to perform his devotions early before the altar of the Blessed Virgin in St. Donatian's church. Going thither one day, he was informed of a conspiracy, but answered; "We are always surrounded by "dangers, but we belong to God. If it be his will, can we "die in a better cause than that of justice and truth?" Whilst he was reciting the penitential psalms before the

altar, the conspirators rushing in, his head was cloven by Fromold Borchard, nephew to Bertulf, in 1124. He was buried in St. Christopher's church at Bruges, not in that of St. Donatian, as Pantoppidan proves. Borchard was broke alive on the wheel, and Bertulf was hung on a rack at Ipres, and exposed on it to be torn by furious dogs, and at length was stoned to death by beggars whilst he remained on that engine. St. Charles's shrine was placed by an order of Charles Philip Rodoan, fourth bishop of Bruges, in 1606, in the chapel of the blessed Virgin, and ever since the year 1610 an high mass in honour of the Trinity is sung on his festival, See the life of this good earl by Walter, archdeacon of Terouenne, and more fully by Gualbert, syndic of Bruges, and by Ælnoth, a monk of Canterbury and Danish missionary at that time. See also Molanus and Miræus in their martyrologies; Henschenius, p. 158. Robertus de Monte in Append. ad Chronicon Sigeberti ad. an 1127. Jac. Maierus, Annal. Flandriæ, l. 4. p. 45, 46. Likewise Ericus Pantoppidanus in his Gesta Danorum extra Daniam. Hafniæ, 1740. t. 2, sec. 1. c. 5. sec. 32. p. 398.

ST. JOAVAN, OR JOEVIN, B. C.

This saint was a fervent disciple of St. Paul of Leon, in Great Britain, his own country, accompanied him into Armorica, led an anchoretical life near him in the country of Ack, and afterward in the isle of Baz. That great saint chose him coadjutor in his bishoprick, when he retired a little before his death. St. Joavan survived him only one year. He is titular saint of two parish churches in the diocess of Saint Paul of Leon, &c. See Lobineau, Vies des Saints de la Bretagne, p. 71. from the breviary and tradition of that church, though the life of St. Jovian, copied by Albert the Great, &c. deserves no regard.

MARCH III.

ST. CUNEGUNDES, EMPRESS.

From her life written by a canon of Bamberg, about the year 1152: also the Dissertation of Henschenius, p. 267.

A. D. 1040.

St. Cunegundes was the daughter of Sigefride, the first count of Luxemburgh, and Hadeswige his pious wife. They instilled into her from her cradle the most tender sentiments of piety, and married her to St. Henry, duke of Bavaria, who, upon the death of the emperor Otho III. was chosen king of the Romans, and crowned at Mentz on the sixth of June, 1002. She was crowned at Paderborn on St. Laurence's day, on which occasion she made great presents to the churches of that city. In the year 1014 she went with her husband to Rome, and received the imperial crown with him from the hands of Pope Benedict VIII. She had, by St. Henry's consent before her marriage, made a vow of virginity. Calumniators afterward accused her to him of freedoms with other men. The holy empress, to remove the scandal of such a slander, trusting in God the protector of innocence, in proof of hers, walked over red hot plough-shares without being hurt. The emperor condemned his too scrupulous fears and credulity, and made her ample amends. They lived from that time in the strictest union of hearts, conspiring to promote in every thing God's honour, and the advancement of piety.

Going once to make a retreat in Hesse, she fell dangerously ill, and made a vow to found a monastery, if she recovered in a place then called Capungen, now Kaffungen, near Cassel, in the diocess of Paderborn, which she executed in a stately

manner, and gave it to nuns of the Order of St. Benedict. Before it was finished St. Henry died, in 1024. She earnestly recommended his soul to the prayers of others, especially to her dear nuns, and expressed her longing desire of joining them. She had already exhausted her treasures and her patrimony in founding bishopricks and monasteries, and in relieving the poor. Whatever was rich or magnificent she thought better suited churches than her palace. She had therefore little now left to give. But still thirsting to embrace perfect evangelical poverty, and to renounce all to serve God without obstacle, on the anniversary day of her husband's death, 1025, she assembled a great number of prelates to the dedication of her church of Kaffungen; and after the gospel was sung at mass, offered on the altar a piece of the true cross, and then put off her imperial robes, and clothed herself with a poor habit: her hair was cut off, and the bishop put on her a veil, and a ring as the pledge of her fidelity to her heavenly spouse. After she was consecrated to God in religion, she seemed entirely to forget that she had been empress, and behaved as the last in the house, being persuaded that she was so before God. She feared nothing more than whatever could bring to her mind the remembrance of her former dignity. She prayed and read much, worked with her hands, abhorred the least appearance of worldly nicety, and took a singular pleasure in visiting and comforting the sick. Thus she passed the fifteen last years of her life, never suffering the least preference to be given her above any one in the community. Her mortifications at length reduced her to a very weak condition, and brought on her last sickness. Her monastery and the whole city of Cassel were grievously afflicted at the thought of their approaching loss; she alone appeared without concern, lying on a coarse hair-cloth, ready to give up the ghost, whilst the prayers of the agonizing were read by her side. Perceiving they were preparing a cloth fringed with gold to cover her corpse after her death, she changed colour and ordered it to be taken away; nor could she be at rest till she was promised she should be buried as a poor religious in her habit. She died on the third of March, 1040. Her body was carried to Bam-

berg, and buried near that of her husband. The greatest part of her relicks still remains in the same church. She was solemnly canonized by Innocent III. in 1200. The author of her life relates many miracles wrought at the tomb, or by the intercession of this holy virgin and widow.

Few arrive at any degree of perfection amongst those who aspire after virtue, because many behave as if they placed it barely in multiplying exercises of piety and good works. This costs little to self-love, which it rather feeds by entertaining a secret vanity, or self-complacency, in those who are not very careful in watching over their hearts. It is a common thing to see persons who have passed forty or fifty years in the constant practice of penance and all religious exercises, and the use of the most holy sacraments, still subject to habitual imperfections, and venial disorders, incompatible with a state of sanctity or perfection. They give marks of sudden resentment, if they happen to be rebuked or despised: are greedy of the esteem of others, take a secret satisfaction in applause, love too much their own ease and conveniencies, and seek those things which flatter self-love. How much are these souls their own enemies by not giving themselves to God without reserve, and taking a firm resolution to labour diligently in watching over themselves, and cutting off all irregular attachments, and purifying their hearts! The neglect of this fosters many habitual little disorders and venial sins, which incredibly obstruct the work of our sanctification, and the advancement of the kingdom of divine grace in our souls. These little enemies wilfully caressed, weaken our good desires, defile even our spiritual actions with a thousand imperfections, and stop the abundant effusion with which the Holy Ghost is infinitely desirous to communicate himself to our souls, and to fill them with his light, grace, peace and holy joy. The saints, by the victory over themselves, and by making it their principal study to live in the most perfect disengagement and purity of heart, offered to God, even in their smallest actions, pure and full sacrifices of love, praise, and obedience. If we desire to cultivate this purity of heart, we must carefully endeavour to discover the imperfections

and disorders of our souls, especially such as are habitual, and strenuously labour to root them out. Secondly, we must keep our senses under a strict guard, and accustom them to restraint by frequent denials. Thirdly, we must live as much as may be in a habit of recollection, and the practice of the divine presence, and, after any dissipating affairs, return eagerly to close retirement for some short time. Fourthly, we must, with perfect simplicity, lay open our whole interior to our spiritual director, and be most solicitous to do this, with particular candour and courage, in things in which we are tempted to use any kind of duplicity or dissimulation. Lastly, we must propose to ourselves, in all our thoughts and actions, the most perfect accomplishment of the will of God, and study to square our whole lives by this great rule, watching in all we do with particular care against motives of vanity, pride, sensuality, interest and aversions, the great enemies to purity of intention.

SS. MARINUS AND ASTERIUS, OR ASTYRIUS, MM.

St. Marinus was a person remarkable both for his wealth and family at Cæsarea in Palestine, about the year 272, and was in course to succeed to the place of a centurion, which was vacant, and about to obtain it; when another came up and said, that according to the laws Marinus could not have that post, on account of his being a Christian. Achæus the governor of Palestine asked Marinus if he was a Christian; who answered in the affirmative: whereupon the judge gave him three hours space to consider whether he would abide by his answer, or recall it. Theotecnus, the bishop of that city, being informed of the affair, came to him, when withdrawn from the tribunal, and taking him by the hand led him to the church. Here, pointing to the sword which he wore, and then to a book of the gospels, asked him which of the two he made his option. Marinus, in answer to the query, without the least hesitation, stretched out his right hand, and laid hold of the sacred book. "Adhere steadfastly then to "God," says the bishop, "and he will strengthen you, and you "shall obtain what you have chosen. Depart in peace."

Being summoned again before the judge, he professed his faith with greater resolution and alacrity than before, and was immediately led away just as he was, and beheaded. St. Asterius, or Astyrius, a Roman senator, in great favour with the emperors, and well known to all on account of his birth and great estate, being present at the martyrdom of St. Marinus, though he was richly dressed, took away the dead body on his shoulders, and having sumptously adorned it, gave it a decent burial. Thus far the acts in Ruinart. Rufinus adds, that he was beheaded for this action. See Eus. hist. l. 7. c. 15, 16, 17.

SS. EMETERIUS, &c. MM.

COMMONLY CALLED MADIR, AND CHELIDONIUS.

They were soldiers of distinguished merit in the Roman army in Spain, and suffered martyrdom at Calahorra, but it is not known in what persecution. Their courage and cheerfulness seemed to increase with their sharpest torments, and to them fires and swords seemed sweet and agreeable. Prudentius says, that the persecutors burned the acts of their martyrdom, envying us the history of so glorious a triumph. He adds, that their festival was kept in Spain with great devotion by all ranks of people; that strangers came in devout pilgrimages to visit their relicks, praying to these patrons of the world; and that none poured forth their pure prayers to them who were not heard and their tears dried up: "For," says he, "they immediately hear every petition, and carry it "to the ear of the eternal king." See Prudentius, de Coro, hymn. 1.

ST. WINWALOE, OF WINWALOC, ABBOT.

Fragan or Fracan, father of this saint, was nearly related to Cathoun, one of the kings or princes of Wales, and had by his wife Gwen three sons, Guethenoc, Jacut, and Winwaloe, whom they bound themselves by vow to consecrate to God from his birth, because he was their third son. The

invasions of the Saxons, and the storms which soon after overwhelmed his own country, obliged him to seek an harbour in which he might serve God in peace. Riwal had retired a little before, with many others, from Wales into Armorica, and had been there kindly received; several Britons, who had followed the tyrant Maximus, having settled in that country long before. Fragan therefore transported thither his whole family, about the middle of the fifth century, and fixed his habitation at a place called from him to this day, Plou-fragan, situated on the river Gouet, which ancient British and Gaulish word signifies blood. All accounts of our saint agree, that his two elder brothers were born in Great Britain, but some place the birth of St. Winwaloe, and of his sister Creirvie, much younger than him, in Armorica. The pious parents brought up their children in the fear of God, but out of fondness delayed to place Winwaloe in a monastery, till he was now grown up. At length, touched by God, the father conducted him to the monastery of Saint Budoc, in the isle of Laurels,[a] now called Isleverte, or Green Island, not far from the isle of Brehat. St. Budoc was an abbot in Great Britain, eminent for piety and learning, and flying from the swords of the Saxons, took refuge among his countrymen in Armorica, and in this little island assembled several monks, and opened a famous school for youth. Under his discipline Winwaloe made such progress, that the holy abbot appointed him superior over eleven monks, whom he sent to lay the foundation of a new monastery. They travelled through Domnonea, or the northern coast of Britanny, and finding a desert island near the mouth of the river Aven, now called Chateaulin, they built themselves several little huts or cells. From these holy inhabitants the name of Tibidy, that is, House of Prayers, was given to that island, which it still retains. This place is exposed to so violent winds and storms, that after three years St. Winwaloe and his community abandoned it, and built themselves a monastery on the continent, in a valley sheltered from the winds, called Landevenech, three leagues from Brest, on the opposite side of

[a] Laureaca.

the bay. Grallo, count of Cornouailles, in which province this abbey is situated, in the diocess of Quimper-Corentin, gave the lands, and was at the expense of the foundation of this famous monastery.

St. Winwaloe, from the time he left his father's house, never wore any other garments but what were made of the skins of goats, and under these an hair shirt: day and night, winter and summer, his clothing was the same. In his monastery, neither wheat-bread, nor wine was used, but for the holy sacrifice of the mass. No other drink was allowed to the community but water, which was sometimes boiled with a small decoction of certain wild herbs. The monks eat only coarse barley-bread, boiled herbs and roots, or barley-meal and herbs mixed, except on Saturdays and Sundays, on which they were allowed cheese and shell-fish, but of these the saint never tasted himself. His coarse barley-bread he always mingled with ashes, and their quantity he doubled in lent, though even then it must have been very small, only to serve for mortification, and an emblem of penance. In lent he took his refreshment only twice a week: his bed was composed of the rough bark of trees, or of sand, with a stone for his pillow. From the relaxation in the rule of abstinence on Saturdays, it is evident that this monastic rule, which was the same in substance with that received in other British, Scotish, and Irish monasteries, was chiefly borrowed from Oriental rules, Saturday being a fast-day according to the discipline of the Roman church. This rule was observed at Landevenech, till Lewis le Debonnaire, for the sake of uniformity, caused that of St. Benedict to be introduced there, in 818. This house was adopted into the congregation of St. Maur, in 1636. St. Winwaloe was sensible that the spirit of prayer is the soul of a religious state, and the comfort and support of all those who are engaged in it: as to himself, his prayer, either mental or vocal, was almost continual, and so fervent, that he seemed to forget that he lived in a mortal body. From twenty years of age till his death he never sat in the church, but always prayed either kneeling or standing unmoved, in the same posture, with his hands lifted up to heaven, and his whole exterior bespoke the profound vene-

ration with which he was penetrated. He died on the third of March, about the year 529, in a very advanced age. His body was buried in his own church, which he had built of wood, on the spot upon which the abbatial house now stands. These relicks were translated into the new church when it was built, but during the ravages of the Normans they were removed to several places in France, and at length into Flanders. At present the chief portions are preserved at Saint Peter's, at Blandinberg, at Ghent, and at Montreuil in Lower Picardy, of which he is titular patron. In Picardy, he is commonly called St. Vignevaley, and more commonly Walovay; in Britanny, Guignole, or more frequently Vennole; in other parts of France, Guingalois; in England, Winwaloe or Winwaloc. His name occurs in the English litany of the seventh age, published by Mabillon.[1] He is titular saint of St. Guingualoe, a priory at Chateau du Loir, dependent on Marmoutier at Tours, and of several churches and parishes in France. His father, St. Fracan, is titular saint of a parish in the diocess of St. Brieuc, called Plou-Fragan, of which he is said to have been lord, and of another in the diocess of Leon, called St. Frogan; also, St. Gwen his mother, of one in the same diocess called Ploe-Gwen, and of another in that of Quimper. In France she is usually called St. Blanche, the British word Gwen signifying Blanche or White. His brothers are honoured in Britanny, St. Guethenoc, on the fifth of November, and St. Jacut, or James, on the eighth of February and the third of March; the latter is patron of the abbey of St. Jagu, in the diocess of Dol. St. Balay, or Valay, chief patron of the parish of Plou-balai, in the diocess of St. Malo, and a St. Martin are styled disciples of St. Winwaloe, and before their monastic profession were lords of Rosmeur, and Ros-madeuc. Some other disciples of our saint are placed in the calendars of several churches in Britanny, as St. Guenhael his successor, St. Idunet or Yonnet, St. Dei, &c. See the ancient life of St. Winwaloe, the first of the three given by Bollandus and Henschenius; that in Surius and

[1] Mabil. in Analect.

Cressy not being genuine. See also Baillet and Lobineau, Lives of the Saints of Britanny, p. 43 and 48.

ST LAMALISSE, C.

He flourished in great sanctity in the isle of Aran, on the west of Scotland, in the seventh century, and from him a neighbouring small island is called to this day St. Lamalisse's Isle. See MSS. memoirs in the Scotish college at Paris.

MARCH IV.

ST. CASIMIR, PRINCE OF POLAND.

From his life compiled by Zachary Ferrier, legate of Leo X. in Poland, thirty-six years after his death; and an authentic relation of his miracles, with many circumstances of his life, by Gregory Swiecicki, canon of Vilna; also the commentary of Henschenius, p. 337.

A. D. 1483.

St. Casimir was the third among the thirteen children of Casimir III. king of Poland, and of Elizabeth of Austria, daughter to the emperor Albert II. a most virtuous woman, who died in 1505. He was born in 1458, on the fifth of October. From his childhood he was remarkably pious and devout. His preceptor was John Dugloss, called Longinus, canon of Cracow, a man of extraordinary learning and piety, who constantly refused all bishopricks, and other dignities of the church and state, which were pressed upon him. Uladislas, the eldest son, was elected king of Bohemia in 1471, and became king of Hungary in 1490. Our saint was the second son: John Albert, the third son, succeeded the father in the kingdom of Poland in 1492; and Alexander the fourth son was called to the same in 1501. Casimir and the

other princes were so affectionately attached to the holy man who was their preceptor, that they could not bear to be separated from him. But Casimir profited most by his pious maxims and example. He consecrated the flower of his age to the exercises of devotion and penance, and had a horror of that softness and magnificence which reign in courts. His clothes were very plain, and under them he wore a hair-shirt. His bed was frequently the ground, and he spent a considerable part of the night in prayer and meditation, chiefly on the passion of our Saviour. He often went out in the night to pray before the church doors; and in the morning waited before them till they were opened to assist at matins. By living always under a sense of the divine presence he remained perpetually united to, and absorpt in, his Creator, maintained an uninterrupted cheerfulness of temper, and was mild and affable to all. He respected the least ceremonies of the church: every thing that tended to promote piety was dear to him. He was particularly devout to the passion of our blessed Saviour, the very thought of which excited him to tears, and threw him into transports of love. He was no less piously affected towards the sacrifice of the altar, at which he always assisted with such reverence and attention that he seemed in raptures. And as a mark of his singular devotion to the Blessed Virgin, he composed, or at least frequently recited, the long hymn that bears his name, a copy of which was, by his desire, buried with him. His love for Jesus Christ shewed itself in his regard for the poor, who are his members, to whose relief he applied whatever he had, and employed his credit with his father, and his brother Uladislas, king of Bohemia, to procure them succour. His compassion made him feel in himself the afflictions of every one.

The Palatines and other nobles of Hungary, dissatisfied with Matthias Corvin, their king, son of the great Huniades, begged the king of Poland to allow them to place his son Casimir on the throne. The saint, not then quite fifteen years of age, was very unwilling to consent; but in compliance with his father's will he went, at the head of an army of twenty thousand men, to the frontiers in 1471. There hear-

ing that Matthias had formed an army of sixteen thousand men to defend him, and that all differences were accommodated between him and his people, and that pope Sixtus IV. had sent an embassy to divert his father from that expedition, he joyfully returned, having with difficulty obtained his father's consent so to do. However, as his dropping this project was disagreeable to the king his father, not to increase his affliction by appearing before him, he did not go directly to Cracow, but retired to the castle of Dobzki, three miles from that city, where he continued three months in the practice of penance. Having learned the injustice of the attempt against the king of Hungary, in which obedience to his father's command prevailed upon him to embark when he was very young, he could never be engaged to resume it by a fresh pressing invitation of the Hungarians, or the iterated orders and entreaties of his father. The twelve years he lived after this he spent in sanctifying himself in the same manner as he had done before. He observed to the last an untainted chastity, notwithstanding the advice of physicians who excited him to marry, imagining, upon some false principle, this to be a means necessary to preserve his life. Being wasted with a lingering consumption, he foretold his last hour, and having prepared himself for it by redoubling his exercises of piety, and receiving the sacraments of the church, he made a happy end at Vilna, the capital of Lithuania, on the fourth of March, 1482, being twenty-three years and five months old. He was buried in the church of St. Stanislas. So many were the miracles wrought by his intercession, that Swiecicki, a canon of Vilna, wrote a whole volume of them from good memoirs, in 1604. He was canonized by pope Leo X. whose legate in Poland, Zachary Ferrier, wrote the saint's life. His body and all the rich stuffs it was wrapped in, were found quite entire, and exhaling a sweet smell one hundred and twenty years after his death, notwithstanding the excessive moisture of the vault. It is honoured in a large rich chapel of marble, built on purpose in that church. St. Casimir is the patron of Poland, and several other places, and is proposed to youth as a particular pattern of purity. His original picture is to be

seen in his chapel in St. German des Prez in Paris, built by John Casimir, king of Poland, the last of the family of Waza, who, renouncing his crown, retired to Paris, and died abbot of St. Germain's in 1668.

What is there on earth which can engage the affections of a Christian, or be the object of his ambition, in whose soul God desires to establish his kingdom. Whoever has conceived a just idea of this immense happiness and dignity, must look upon all the glittering bubbles of this world as empty and vain, and consider every thing in this life barely as it can advance or hinder the great object of all his desires. Few arrive at this happy and glorious state, because scarce any one seeks it with his whole heart, and has the courage sincerely to renounce all things and die to himself: and this precious jewel cannot be purchased upon any other terms. The kingdom of God can only be planted in a soul upon the ruins of self-love: so long as this reigns, it raises insuperable obstacles to the perfect establishment of the empire of divine love. The amiable Jesus lives in all souls which he animates by his sanctifying grace, and the Holy Ghost dwells in all such. But in most of these how many worldly maxims and inclinations diametrically opposite to those of our most holy heavenly king, hold their full sway! how many secret disorders and irregular attachments are cherished! how much is found of self-love, with which sometimes their spiritual exercises themselves are infected! The sovereign king of men and their merciful Redeemer is properly said to reign only in those souls which study effectually, and without reserve, to destroy in their affections whatever is opposite to his divine will, to subdue all their passions, and to subject all their powers to his holy love. Such fall not into any venial sins with full deliberation, and wipe away those of frailty into which they are betrayed, by the compunction and penance in which they constantly live, and by the constant attention with which they watch daily over themselves. They pray with the utmost earnestness that God deliver them from all the power of the enemy, and establish in all their affections the perfect empire of his grace and love; and to fulfil his

will in the most perfect manner in all their actions, is their most earnest desire and hearty endeavour. How bountifully does God reward, even in this life, those who are thus liberal toward him! St. Casimir, who had tasted of this happiness, and learned truly to value the heavenly grace, loathed all earthly pomp and delights. With what joy ought not all Christians, both rich and poor, to be filled when they hear: *The kingdom of God is within you!* With what ardour ought they not to devote themselves to make God reign perfectly in their hearts! How justly did St. Casimir prefer this pursuit to earthly kingdoms!

ST. LUCIUS, POPE AND MARTYR.

From Eus. l. 7. c. 2. and St. Cyprian's letters. See Tillem. t. 4. p. 118. Pagi, Ceillier, t. 3. p. 118. and Pearson, Annal. Cyprian. p. 31. 33.

A. D. 253.

St. Lucius was a Roman by birth, and one of the clergy of that church under SS. Fabian and Cornelius. This latter being crowned with martyrdom, in 252, St. Lucius succeeded him in the pontificate. The emperor Gallus having renewed the persecution of his predecessor Decius, at least in Rome, this holy pope was no sooner placed in the chair of St. Peter, but was banished with several others, though to what place is uncertain. "Thus," says St. Dionysius of Alexandria, "did "Gallus deprive himself of the succour of heaven, by ex- "pelling those who every day prayed to God for his peace "and prosperity." St. Cyprian wrote to St. Lucius to congratulate him both on his promotion, and for the grace of suffering banishment for Christ. Our saint had been but a short time in exile, when he was recalled, with his companions, to the incredible joy of his people, who went out of Rome in crowds to meet him. St. Cyprian wrote to him a second letter of congratulation on this occasion.[1] He says,

[1] Ep. 58. Pamelio.—61. Fello, p. 272.

" He had not lost the dignity of martyrdom because he had " the will, as the three children in the furnace, though pre- " served by God from death: this glory added a new dignity " to his priesthood, that a bishop assisted at God's altar, " who exhorted his flock to martyrdom by his own example " as well as by his words. By giving such graces to his pas- " tors, God shewed where his true church was: for he " denied the like glory of suffering to the Novatian heretics. " The enemy of Christ only attacks the soldiers of Christ: " heretics he knows to be already his own, and passes them " by. He seeks to throw down those who stand against him." He adds in his own name and that of his colleagues: " We " do not cease in our sacrifices and prayers (in sacrficiis et " orationibus nostris) to God the Father, and to Christ his " Son, our Lord, giving thanks and praying together, that " he who perfects all may consummate in you the glorious " crown of your confession, who perhaps has only recalled " you that your glory might not be hidden; for the victim, " which owes his brethren an example of virtue and faith, " ought to be sacrificed in their presence."(2)

St. Cyprian, in his letter to pope Stephen, avails himself of the authority of St. Lucius against the Novatian heretics, as having decreed against them, that those who were fallen were not to be denied reconciliation and communion, but to be absolved when they had done penance for their sin. Eusebius says, he did not sit in the pontifical chair above eight months; and he seems, from the chronology of St. Cyprian's letters, to have sat only five or six, and to have died on the fourth of March, in 253, under Gallus, though we know not in what manner. The most ancient calendars mention him on the fifth of March, others, with the Roman, on the fourth, which seems to have been the day of his death, as the fifth that of his burial. His body was found in the Catacombs, and laid in the church of St. Cecily in Rome, where it is now exposed to public veneration by the order of Clement VIII.

(2) Ep. 67. Pamelio.—68 Fello. in Ed. Oxon.

ST. ADRIAN, BISHOP OF ST. ANDREWS, M.
IN SCOTLAND.

When the Danes, in the ninth century, made frequent descents upon the coast of Scotland, plundered several provinces, and massacred great part of the inhabitants, this holy pastor often softened their fury, and converted several among them to Christ. In a most cruel invasion of these pirates, he withdrew into the isle of May, in the bay of the river Forth; but the barbarians plundering also that island, discovered him there, and slew him with another bishop, named Stalbrand, and a great number of others: the Aberdeen Breviary says six thousand six hundred. This massacre happened in the reign of Constantine II. in the year 874. A great monastery was built of polished stone in honour of St. Adrian, in the isle of May, the church of which, enriched with his relicks, was a place of great devotion. See bishop Lesley, Hist. l. 5. Breviar. Aberdon. & Chronica Skonensia.

MARCH V.

SS. ADRIAN AND EUBULUS,
OF PALESTINE, MARTYRS.

From Eusebius's history of the Martyrs of Palestine, c. 11. p. 341.

A. D. 309.

In the seventh year of Dioclesian's persecution, continued by Galerius Maximianus, when Firmilian, the most bloody governor of Palestine, had stained Cæsarea with the blood of many illustrious martyrs, Adrian and Eubulus came out of the country called Magantia to Cæsarea, in order, to visit the holy confessors there. At the gates of the city they were

asked, as others were, whither they were going, and upon what errand. They ingenuously confessed the truth, and were brought before the president, who ordered them to be tortured, and their sides to be torn with iron hooks, and then condemned them to be exposed to wild beasts. Two days after, when the Pagans at Cæsarea celebrated the festival of the public Genius, Adrian was exposed to a lion, and not being despatched by that beast, but only mangled, was at length killed by the sword. Eubulus was treated in the same manner, two days later. The judge offered him his liberty if he would sacrifice to idols; but the saint preferred a glorious death, and was the last that suffered in this persecution at Cæsarea, which had now continued twelve years under three successive governors, Flavian, Urban, and Firmilian. Divine vengeance pursuing the cruel Firmilian, he was that same year beheaded for his crimes, by the emperor's order, as his predecessor Urban had been two years before.

It is in vain that we take the name of Christians, or pretend to follow Christ, unless we carry our crosses after him. It is in vain that we hope to share in his glory, and in his kingdom, if we accept not the condition.[1] We cannot arrive at heaven by any other road but that which Christ held, who bequeathed his cross to all his elect as their portion and inheritance in this world. None can be exempted from this rule, without renouncing his title to heaven. Let us sound our own hearts, and see if our sentiments are conformable to these principles of the holy religion which we profess. Are our lives a constant exercise of patience under all trials, and a continual renunciation of our senses and corrupt inclinations, by the practice of self-denial and penance? Are we not impatient under pain or sickness, fretful under disappointments, disturbed and uneasy at the least accidents which are disagreeable to our nature, harsh and peevish in reproving the faults of others, and slothful and unmortified in endeavouring to correct our own? What a monstrous contradic-

[1] Mat. xvi. 24. Luke xxiv. 26.

tion is it to call ourselves followers of Christ, yet to live irreconcileable enemies to his cross! We can never separate Christ from his cross, on which he sacrificed himself for us, that he might unite us on it eternally to himself. Let us courageously embrace it, and he will be our comfort and support, as he was of his martyrs.

ST. KIARAN, OR KENERIN, B. C.

CALLED BY THE BRITONS, PIRAN.

Among the Irish saints who were somewhat older than St. Patrick, the first and most celebrated is St. Kiaran, whom the Irish style the first-born of their saints. According to some he was a native of the country of Ossory, according to others, of Cork. Usher places his birth about the year 352. Having received some imperfect information about the Christian faith, at thirty years of age he took a journey to Rome, that he might be instructed in its heavenly doctrine, and learn faithfully to practise its precepts. He was accompanied home by four holy clerks, who were all afterward bishops, their names are, Lugacius, Columban, Lugad, and Cassan. The Irish writers suppose him to have been ordained bishop at Rome; but what John of Tinmouth affirms, seems far more probable, that he was one of the twelve, whom St. Patrick consecrated bishops in Ireland to assist him in planting the gospel in that island. For his residence, he built himself a cell in a place encompassed with woods, near the water of Fuaran, which soon grew into a numerous monastery. A town was afterward built there called Saigar, now from the saint Sier-keran. Here he converted to the faith his family, and whole clan, which was that of the Osraigs, with many others. Having given the religious veil to his mother, whose name was Liadan, he appointed her a cell or monastery near his own, called by the Irish Ceall Lidain. In his old age, being desirous to prepare himself for his passage to eternity in close retirement, he passed into Cornwall, where he led an eremitical life, near the Severn sea, fifteen miles from Padstow. Certain disciples joined him, and by his words and example formed themselves to a

true spirit of christian piety and humility. In this place he closed his mortal pilgrimage by a happy death: a town upon the spot is to this day called from him St. Piran's in the Sands, and a church is there dedicated to God in his memory, where was formerly a sanctuary near St. Mogun's church, upon St. Mogun's creek.[a] See John of Tinmouth, Usher, &c. collected by Henschenius: also Leland's collections, published by Hearne, t. 3. p. 10. and 174.

SAINT ROGER, C.

A disciple of St. Francis of Assisio, who received him into his Order in 1216, and sent him into Spain, though Wading calls him a layman. The spirit of poverty which he professed, he inherited of his holy father in the most perfect degree,

[a] A great number of other Irish saints retired to Cornwall, where many towns and churches still retain their names. Thus St. Burian's is so called from an Irish virgin called Buriana, to whose church and college here king Athelstan, in 936, granted the privilege of Sanctuary. See Leland, Collect. t. 3. p. 7, 8.

St. Ia

Was daughter to an Irish nobleman, and a disciple of St. Barricus; Iä and Erwine, and many others, came out of Ireland into Cornwall, and landed at Pendinas, a stony rock and peninsula. At her request Dinan, a lord of the country, built there a church, since called St. Iës, eighteen miles from St. Piran's in the Sands, on the Severn. St. Carantoke's is two miles above St. Piran's. St. Iës stands two miles from Lannant; St. Erth is a parish church two miles above Lannant. St. Cua and St. Tedy's parishes are situated in the same part. St. Lide's island, where her tomb was formerly visited by the whole country, still retains her name. See the life of St. Ia quoted by Leland, Coll. t. 3. p. 11.

St. Breaca, V.

She was born in Ireland on the borders of Leinster and Ulster, and consecrated herself to God in a religious state under the direction of St. Bridget, who built for her a separate oratory, and afterward a monastery, in a place since called the field of Breaca. She afterward passed into Cornwall in company with abbot Sinnin, a disciple of St. Patrick, Maruan, a monk, Germoch, or Gemoch, king Elwen, Crewenna, and Helen. St. Breaca landed at Revyer, otherwise called Theodore's castle, situated on the eastern bank of the river Hayle, long since, as it seems, swallowed up by the sands on the coast of the northern sea of Cornwall. Tewder, a Welchman, slew part of this holy company. St. Breaca proceeded to Pencair, an hill in Pembro parish, now commonly called St. Banka. She afterward built two churches, one at Tronewith, the other at Talmeneth, two mansion places in the parish of Pembro, as is related in the life of St. Elwin. See Leland's Itinerary published by Hearne, p. 5.

St. Germoke's church is three miles from St. Michael's Mount, by east southeast, a mile from the sea. His tomb is yet seen there, and his chair is shewn in the church-yard, and his well a little without the church-yard. Leland, ib. p. 6.

St. Mawnoun's church stands at the point of the haven toward Falmouth, ib. p. 13.

and St. Francis commended his charity above all his other disciples. The gifts of prophecy and miracles rendered him illustrious both living and after his death, which happened in 1236. His head is kept at Villa-Franca, in the diocess of Asturia, and his body at Todi in Italy, where he is honoured with a particular office ratified by Gregory IX. See Wading's Annals, published by Fonseca at Rome, in 1732. t. 2. p. 413. 414. also Henschenius, p. 418. Pope Benedict XIV. granted to the Franciscans for his festival the fifth of March.

MARCH VI.

ST. CHRODEGANG, BISHOP OF METZ, CONFESSOR.

From Paul the Deacon, l. 2. de Gest. Longob. c. 16. Henschenius, p. 453. Mabill. Annal. Ben. l. 22. t. 2. & Act. SS. Ord. Ben. t. 4. p. 184. Ceillier, t. 18. p. 176. His life, published by George Von Eckart, Hist. Franciæ Orient. t. 1. p. 912. Also Meurisse, Hist. des Evêques de Metz, l. 2.

A. D. 766.

This saint, nobly born in Brabant, then called Hasbain, was educated in the abbey of St. Tron, and for his great learning and virtue was made referendary, chancellor of France, and prime minister, by Charles Martel, mayor of the French palace, in 737. He was always meanly clad from his youth; he macerated his body by fasting, watching, and hair-cloths, and allowed his senses no superfluous gratifications of any kind. His charity to all in distress seemed to know no bounds; he supported an incredible number of poor, and was the protector and father of orphans and widows. Soon after the death of Charles Martel, he was chosen bishop of Metz, in 742. Prince Pepin, the son and successor of Charles, uncle to our saint by his mother, Landrada, would not consent to

his being ordained, but on the condition that he should still continue at the helm of the state. Chrodegang always retained the same sweetness, humility, recollection, and simplicity in his behaviour and dress. He constantly wore a rough hair-shirt under his clothes, spent good part of the night in watching, and usually at his devotions watered his cheeks with tears. Pope Stephen III. being oppressed by the Lombards, took refuge in France. Crodegang went to conduct him over the Alps, and king Pepin was no sooner informed that he had passed these mountains in his way to France, but he sent Charles, his eldest son, to accompany him to Pont-yon, in Champagne, where the king was to receive him. The pope being three miles distant from that city, the king came to meet him, and having joined him alighted from his horse, and prostrated himself, as did the queen, his children, and the lords of his court; and the king walked some time by the side of his horse to do him honour. The pope retired to the monastery of St. Denys; and king Pepin, in the year 754, sent St. Chrodegang on an embassy to Astulph, king of the Lombards, praying him out of respect to the holy apostles not to commit any hostilities against Rome, nor to oblige the Romans to superstitions contrary to their laws, and to restore the towns which he had taken from the holy see; but this embassy was without effect. The saint, in 755, converted the chapter of secular canons of his cathedral into a regular community, in which he was imitated by many other churches. He composed for his regular canons a rule, consisting of thirty-four articles. In the first he lays down humility for the foundation of all the rest.[1] He obliged the canons to confess at least twice a year to the bishop, before the beginning of Advent and Lent.[2] But these churches, even that of Metz, have again secularized themselves. The saint built and endowed the monasteries of St. Peter, that of Gorze, and a third in the diocess of Worms, called Lorsh or Laurisham. He died on the sixth of March, in 766, and was buried at Gorze, to which by his will which is still extant, he

[1] Ch. 14.—[2] See the other regulations abridged in Fleury, &c. the entire rule published genuine in Le Cointe's Annals, t. 5. and in the later editions of the councils.

demised several estates. He is named in the French, German, and Belgic Martyrologies.

The zeal of St. Chrodegang, in restoring the primitive and apostolic spirit in the clergy, particularly their fervour and devotion in the ministry of the altar, is the best proof of his ardour to advance the divine honour. To pay to Almighty God the public homage of praise and love, in the name of the whole church, is a function truly angelical. Those, who by the divine appointment are honoured with this sublime charge, resemble those glorious heavenly spirits who always assist before the throne of God. What ought to be the sanctity of their lives! how pure their affections, how perfectly disengaged from all inordinate attachments to creatures, particularly how free from the least filth of avarice, and every other vice! All Christians have a part in this heavenly function.

B. COLETTE, VIRGIN AND ABBESS.

From her life written by her confessor, Peter de Vaux. See Helyot Hist. des Ord. Relig. t. 7. p. 98. Miræus; and Barbaza, Vies des Saints du Tiers Ordre de St. Francois, t. 2. p. 51.

A. D. 1447.

Colette Boilet, a carpenter's daughter, was born at Corbie, in Picardy, in 1380. Her parents, out of devotion to St. Nicholas, gave her the name of Colette, the diminutive of Nicholas. She was brought up in the love of humiliations and austerities. Her desire to preserve her purity without the least blemish made her avoid as much as possible all company, even of persons of her own sex, unless it was sometimes to draw them from the love of the world by her moving discourses, which were attended with a singular blessing from almighty God. Humility was her darling virtue; and her

greatest delight seemed to be in seeing herself contemned. She was so full of confusion at her own miseries and baseness, and was so contemptible in her own eyes, that she was ashamed to appear before any one, placed herself far below the greatest sinners, and studied by all sorts of humiliations to prevent the least motion of secret pride or self-conceit in her heart. She served the poor and the sick with an affection that charmed and comforted them. She lived in strict solitude in a small, poor, abandoned apartment in her father's house, and spent her time there in manual labour and prayer. Being very beautiful, she begged of God to change her complexion, and her face became so pale and thin, that she should scarce be known for the same person. Yet a certain majesty of virtue, shining in her countenance, gave her charms conducive to the edification of others by the sweetness, modesty, and air of piety and divine love discernible in her looks. Her parents, who though poor, were virtuous, and exceeding charitable, according to their abilities, and great peace-makers among their neighbours, seeing her directed by the spirit of God, allowed her full liberty in her devotions. After their death she distributed the little they left her among the poor, and retired among the Beguines, devout societies of women, established in several parts of Flanders, Picardy, and Lorrain, who maintain themselves by the work of their hands, leading a middle kind of life between the secular and religious, but make no solemn vows. Not finding this way of life austere enough, she, by her confessor's advice, took the habit of the third Order of St. Francis, called the Penitents; and, three years after, that of the mitigated Clares, or Urbanists, with the view of reforming that Order, and reducing it to its primitive austerity. Having obtained of the abbot of Corbie a small hermitage, she spent in it three years in extraordinary austerity, near that abbey. After this, in order to execute the project she had long formed of re-establishing the primitive spirit and practice of her Order, she went to the convent at Amiens, and from thence to several others. To succeed in her undertaking, it was necessary that she should be vested with proper authority: to procure which she made a journey to Nice in Provence, to

wait on Peter de Luna, who in the great schism was acknowledged pope by the French, under the name of Benedict XIII. and happened then to be in that city. He constituted her superioress-general of the whole Order of St. Clare, with full power to establish in it whatever regulations she thought conducive to God's honour and the salvation of others. She attempted to revive the primitive rule and spirit of St. Francis in the convents of the diocesses of Paris, Beauvais, Noyon, and Amiens; but met with the most violent opposition, and was treated as a fanatic. She received all injuries with joy, and was not discouraged by human difficulties. Some time after she met with a more favourable reception in Savoy, and her reformation began to take root there, and passed thence into Burgundy, France, Flanders, and Spain. Many ancient houses received it, that of Besanzon being the first, and she lived to erect seventeen new ones. Several houses of Franciscan friars received the same. But Leo X. in 1517, by a special bull, united all the different reformations of the Franciscans under the name of Observantines: and thus the distinction of Colettines is extinct. So great was her love for poverty, in imitation of that of Christ, that she never put on so much as sandals, going always barefoot, and would have no churches or convents but what were small and mean. Her habit was not only of most coarse stuff, but made of above a hundred patches sewed together. She continually inculcated to her nuns the denial of their own wills in all things, as Christ from his first to his last breath did the will of his heavenly Father: saying, that all self-will was the broad way to hell. The sacred passion of Christ was the subject of her constant meditation. On Fridays, from six in the morning, till six at night, she continued in this meditation, without eating or doing any other thing, but referring all her thoughts and affections to it with a flood of tears; also during the Holy-Week, and whenever she assisted at mass: she often fell into ecstasies when she considered it. She shewed a particular respect to the holy Cross; but above all to Christ present in the blessed Eucharist, when she appeared in raptures of adoration and love. She often purified her conscience by sacramental confession before she heard mass, to

assist thereat with the greater purity of soul. Her zeal made her daily to pour forth many fervent prayers for the conversion of sinners, and also for the souls in purgatory, often with many tears. Being seized with her last sickness in her convent at Ghent, she received the sacraments of the church, foretold her death, and happily expired in her sixty-seventh year, on the sixth of March, in 1447. Her body is exposed to veneration in the church of that convent called Bethleem, in Ghent. She was never canonized, nor is she named in the Roman Martyrology: but Clement VIII. Paul V. Gregory XIII. and Urban VIII. have approved of an office in her honour for the whole Franciscan Order, and certain cities. Her body was taken up at Ghent, in 1747, and several miracles wrought on the occasion were examined by the Ordinary of the place, who sent the process and relation of them to Rome.

ST. FRIDOLIN, A.

He was an Irish or Scotish abbot, who, leaving his own country, founded several monasteries in Austrasia, Burgundy, and Switzerland: the last was that of Sekingen, in an isle in the Rhine, now one of the four forest towns belonging to the house of Austria. In this monastery he died, in 538. He is the tutelar patron of the Swiss Canton of Glaris, who carry in their coat of arms his picture in the Benedictin habit, though he was not of that Order. See Molanus, Addit. ad Usuard. Pantaleon, Prosopographiæ Vir. Illustr. German. ad an. 502. King, in Calend, Wion, Lignum Vitæ, l. 3.

ST. BALDREDE, BISHOP OF GLASGOW, C.

He was immediate successor of St. Mungo in that see, established many nunneries in Scotland, and died in the province of Laudon, about the year 608. His relicks were very famous in many churches in Scotland. See Adam King, in Calend. and the historians Boetius, Major, Lesley, &c.

SS. KYNEBURGE, KYNESWIDE, AND TIBBA.

The two first were daughters of Penda, the cruel Pagan king of Mercia, and sisters to three successive christian kings, Peada, Wulfere, and Ethelred, and to the pious prince Merowald Kyneburge, as Bede informs us,[1] was married to Alcfrid, eldest son of Oswi, and in his father's life-time king of Bernicia. They are said to have lived in perpetual continency. By his death she was left a widow in the bloom of life, and renouncing the world, governed a nunnery which she built; or, according to others, found built by her brother Wulfere, in a moist fenny place, on the confines of the counties of Huntingdon and Northampton, then called Dormundcaster, afterward, from her, Kyneburgecaster, now Caster. The author of her life in Capgrave says, that she lived here a mirror of all sanctity, and that no words can express the bowels of charity with which she cherished the souls which served God under her care; how watchful she was over their comportment, and how zealous in instructing and exhorting them; and with what floods of tears she implored for them the divine grace and mercy. She had a wonderful compassion for the poor, and strongly exhorted her royal brothers to alms-giving and works of mercy. Kyneswide and Kynedride, (though many confound the latter with St. Kyneburge,) were also daughters of Penda, left very young at his death. By an early consecration of their virginity to God, they devoted themselves to his service, and both embraced a religious state. Kyneswide took the holy veil in the monastery of Dormundcaster.

The bodies of these saints were translated to Peterborough, where their festival was kept on the sixth of March, together with that of St. Tibba, a holy virgin, their kinswoman, who having spent many years in solitude and devotion, passed to glory on the thirteenth of December. Camden informs us,[2] that she was honoured with particular devotion at Rihal, a town near the river Wash, in Rutlandshire. See Ingulphus,

[1] Bed. hist. l. 3. c. 21.—[2] Camden in Rutlandshire.



F. P. Malpeus Pinxit. William Finden Sculpsit.

S^t THOMAS OF AQUINO,

Doctor of the Church & Confessor.

don, Published Dec^r 8^th 1823 by John Murphy, 19 Howland Street, Fitzroy Square

MARCH VII

ST. THOMAS OF AQUINO,

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH AND CONFESSOR.

A. D. 1274

THE counts of Aquino, who have flourished in the Kingdom of Naples these last ten centuries, derive their noble race from a certain Landulph prince. They were allied to the Kings of Sicily and Arragon, to St. Lewis of France, and many other sovereign houses of Europe. One of their ancestors having married the sister of the emperor Frederick I. he gave himself great nephew to that prince; and several counts in the



hist. p. 850. Will. of Malmesbury, l. 4. de Pontif. p. 29. Capgrave and Harpsfield, sæc. 7. c. 23.

ST. CADROE, C.

He was a noble Scotsman, son of count (or rather laird) Fokerstrach, and travelling into France he took the monastic habit at St. Bennet's, on the Loire. He afterward reformed the monastery of St. Clement, at Metz, in 960, and died in a visit which he made to Adelaide, mother of the emperor Otho I. at Neristein, about the year 975. His relicks are kept at St. Clement's at Metz, and he is honoured on the sixth of March. See Mabillon, sec. 5. Ben. p. 480. and sec. 6. p. 28. Henschenius; and Calmet, Hist. de Lor. l. 19. n. 67. p. 1011.

MARCH VII.

ST. THOMAS, OF AQUINO,

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH AND CONFESSOR.

From his life, written by Bartholomew of Lucca, some time the saint's confessor: also another life compiled for his canonization by William of Tocco, prior of Benevento, who had been personally acquainted with the saint, &c. See F. Touron, in his life of St. Thomas, in quarto, Paris, 1737.

A. D. 1274.

THE counts of Aquino, who have flourished in the kingdom of Naples these last ten centuries, derive their pedigree from a certain Lombard prince. They were allied to the kings of Sicily and Arragon, to St. Lewis of France, and many other sovereign houses of Europe. Our saint's grandfather having married the sister of the emperor Frederick I. he was himself grand nephew to that prince, and second cousin to the

emperor Henry VI. and in the third degree to Frederick II.[a] His father, Landulph, was count of Aquino, and lord of Loretto and Belcastro: his mother Theodora was daughter to the count of Theate. The saint was born towards the end of the year 1226. St. Austin observes,[1] that the most tender age is subject to various passions, as of impatience, choler, jealousy, spite, and the like, which appear in children: no such thing was seen in Thomas. The serenity of his countenance, the constant evenness of his temper, his modesty and sweetness, were sensible marks that God prevented him with his early graces. The count of Aquino conducted him to the abbey of Mount Cassino, when he was but five years old, to be instructed by those good monks in the first principles of religion and learning; and his tutors soon saw with joy the rapidity of his progress, his great talents, and his happy dispositions to virtue. He was but ten years of age when the abbot told his father that it was time to send him to some university. The count, before he sent him to Naples, took him for some months to see his mother at his seat at Loretto, the place which about the end of that century grew famous for devotion to our Lady. Thomas was the admiration of the whole family. Amidst so much company, and so many servants, he appeared always as much recollected, and occupied on God, as he had been in the monastery; he spoke little, and always to the purpose; and he employed all his time in prayer, or serious and profitable exercises. His great delight seemed to be to intercede for, and to distribute, his parents' plentiful alms among the poor at the gate, whom he studied by an hundred ingenious contrivances to relieve. He robbed himself of his own victuals for that purpose; which his father having discovered, he gave him leave to distribute things at discretion, which liberty he made good use of for the little time he stayed.

[1] L. 1. Conf. c. 7.

[a] St. Thomas was born at Belcastro: on his ancient illustrious pedigree and its branches, which still flourish in Calabria, see Barrius, de Antiquitate et Situ Calabriæ, with the notes of Thomas Aceti, l. 4. c. 2. p. 288, &c. where he refutes the Bollandists, who place his birth at Aquino in Campania, on the borders of that province.

The countess, apprehensive of the dangers her son's innocence might be exposed to in an academy, desired that he should perform his studies with a private preceptor under her own eyes; but the father, knowing the great advantages of emulation and mutual communication in studies, was determined to send him to Naples, where the emperor Frederick II. being exasperated against Bologna, had lately, in 1224, erected an university, forbidding students to resort to any other in Italy. This immediately drew thither great numbers of students, and with them disorder and licentiousness, like that described by St. Austin in the great schools of Carthage. (a) Thomas soon perceived the dangers, and regretted the sanctuary, of Mount Cassino: but by his extraordinary watchfulness, he lived here like the young Daniel in the midst of Babylon, or Toby in the infidel Ninive. He guarded his eyes with an extreme caution, shunned entirely all conversation with any woman whatever, and with any young men whose steady virtue did not render him perfectly secure as to their behaviour. Whilst others went to profane diversions, he retired into some church or into his closet, making prayer and study his only pleasure. He learned rhetoric under Peter Martin, and philosophy under Peter of Hibernia, one of the most learned men of his age, and with such wonderful progress, that he repeated the lessons more clearly than the master had explained them: yet his greater care was to advance daily in the science of the saints, by holy prayer, and all good works. His humility concealed them; but his charity and fervour sometimes betrayed his modesty, and discovered them, especially in his great alms, for which he deprived himself of almost all things, and in which he was careful to hide from his left-hand what his right did.

The Order of St. Dominick, who had been dead twenty-two years, then abounded with men full of the spirit of God. The frequent conversations Thomas had with one of that body, a very interior holy man, filled his heart with heavenly devotion and comfort, and inflamed him daily with a more ardent love of God, which so burned in his breast that at his prayers

(a) Conf. l. 5. c. 2.

his countenance seemed one day, as it were, to dart rays of light, and he conceived a vehement desire to consecrate himself wholly to God in that Order. His tutor perceived his inclinations and informed the count of the matter, who omitted neither threats nor promises to defeat such a design. But the saint, not listening to flesh and blood in the call of heaven, demanded with earnestness to be admitted into the Order, and accordingly received the habit in the convent of Naples, in 1243, being then seventeen years old. The countess Theodora his mother, being informed of it, set out for Naples to disengage him, if possible, from that state of life. Her son, on the first news of her journey, begged his superiors to remove him, as they did first to the convent of Saint Sabina in Rome, and soon after to Paris, out of the reach of his relations. Two of his brothers, Landulph and Reynold, commanders in the emperor's army in Tuscany, by her direction so well guarded all the roads that he fell into their hands, near Acqua-pendente. They endeavoured to pull off his habit, but he resisted them so violently that they conducted him in it to the seat of his parents, called Rocca-Secca. The mother overjoyed at their success, made no doubt of overcoming her son's resolution. She endeavoured to persuade him that to embrace such an Order, against his parents' advice, could not be the call of heaven; adding all manner of reasons, fond caresses, entreaties, and tears. Nature made her eloquent and pathetic. He appeared sensible of her affliction, but his constancy was not to be shaken. His answers were modest and respectful, but firm in shewing his resolution to be the call of God, and ought consequently to take place of all other views whatsoever, even for his service any other way. At last, offended at his unexpected resistance, she expressed her displeasure in very choleric words, and ordered him to be more closely confined and guarded, and that no one should see him but his two sisters. The reiterated solicitations of the young ladies were a long and violent assault. They omitted nothing that flesh and blood could inspire on such an occasion, and represented to him the danger of causing the death of his mother by grief. He on the contrary spoke to them in so moving a manner, on the con-

tempt of the world, and the love of virtue, that they both yielded to the force of his reasons for his quitting the world, and, by his persuasion, devoted themselves to a sincere practice of piety.

This solitude furnished him with the most happy opportunity for holy contemplation and assiduous prayer. Some time after, his sisters conveyed to him some books, viz. a bible, Aristotle's logics, and the works of the Master of the Sentences. During this interval his two brothers, Landulph and Reynold, returning home from the army, found their mother in the greatest affliction, and the young novice triumphant in his resolution. They would needs undertake to overcome him, and began their assault by shutting him up in a tower of the castle. They tore in pieces his habit on his back, and after bitter reproaches and dreadful threats they left him, hoping his confinement, and the mortifications every one strove to give him, would shake his resolution. This not succeeding, the devil suggested to these two young officers a new artifice for diverting him from pursuing his vocation. They secretly introduced one of the most beautiful and most insinuating young strumpets of the country, into his chamber, promising her a considerable reward in case she could draw him into sin. She employed all the arms of satan to succeed in so detestable a design. The saint, alarmed and affrighted at the danger, profoundly humbled himself, and cried out to God most earnestly for his protection; then snatching up a firebrand struck her with it, and drove her out of his chamber. After this victory, not moved with pride, but blushing with confusion for having been so basely assaulted, he fell on his knees and thanked God for his merciful preservation, consecrated to him anew his chastity, and redoubled his prayers, and the earnest cry of his heart with sighs and tears, to obtain the grace of being always faithful to his promises. Then falling into a slumber, as the most ancient historians of his life relate,[3] he was visited by two angels, who seemed to gird him round the waist with a cord so tight that it

[3] Gul. Tocco. Bern. Guid. Antonin. Malvend.

awaked him, and made him to cry out. His guards ran in, but he kept his secret to himself. It was only a little before his death that he disclosed this incident to F. Reynold his confessor, adding that he had received this favour about thirty years before, from which time he had never been annoyed with temptations of the flesh; yet he constantly used the utmost caution and watchfulness against that enemy, and he would otherwise have deserved to forfeit that grace. One heroic victory sometimes obtains of God a recompense and triumph of this kind. Our saint having suffered in silence this imprisonment and persecution upwards of a twelvemonth, some say two years, at length, on the remonstrances of pope Innocent IV. and the emperor Frederick, on account of so many acts of violence in his regard, both the countess and his brothers began to relent. The Dominicans of Naples being informed of this, and that his mother was disposed to connive at measures that might be taken to procure his escape, they hastened in disguise to Rocca-Secca, where his sister, knowing that the countess no longer opposed his escape, contrived his being let down out of his tower in a basket. He was received by his brethren in their arms, and carried with joy to Naples. The year following he there made his profession, looking on that day as the happiest of his whole life in which he made a sacrifice of his liberty that he might belong to God alone. But his mother and brothers renewed their complaints to pope Innocent IV. who sent for Thomas to Rome, and examined him, on the subject of his vocation to the state of religion, in their presence; and having received entire satisfaction on this head, the pope admired his virtue, and approved of his choice of that state of life, which from that time he was suffered to pursue in peace. Albertus Magnus teaching then at Cologne, the general, John the Teutonic, took the saint with him from Rome to Paris, and thence to Cologne. Thomas gave all his time, which was not employed in devotion and other duties, to his studies, retrenching part of that which was allowed for his meals and sleep, not out of a vain passion, or the desire of applause, but for the advancement of God's honour and the interests of

religion, according to what he himself teaches.[4] His humility made him conceal his progress and deep penetration, insomuch that his school-fellows thought he learned nothing, and, on account of his silence, called him The dumb Ox, and the Great Sicilian Ox. One of them even offered to explain his lessons to him, whom he thankfully listened to without speaking, though he was then capable of teaching him. They who know how much scholars and masters usually seek to distinguish themselves, and display their science, will give to so uncommon an humility its due praise. But the brightness of his genius, his quick and deep penetration and learning were at last discovered, in spite of all his endeavours to conceal them: for his master, Albertus, having propounded to him several questions on the most knotty and obscure points, his answers, which the duty of obedience extorted, astonished the audience; and Albertus, not able to contain his joy and admiration, said, "We call "him the dumb ox, but he will give such a bellow in learn-"ing as will be heard all over the world." This applause made no impression on the humble saint. He continued the same in simplicity, modesty, silence, and recollection, because his heart was the same; equally insensible to praises and humiliations, full of nothing but of God and his own insufficiency, never reflecting on his own qualifications, or on what was the opinion of others concerning him. In his first year, under Albertus Magnus, he wrote comments on Aristotle's Ethics. The general chapter of the Dominicans, held at Cologne in 1245, deputed Albertus to teach at Paris, in their college of St. James, which the university had given them; and it is from that college they are called in France, Jacobins. St. Thomas was sent with him to continue his studies there. His school exercises did not interrupt his prayer. By an habitual sense of the divine presence, and devout aspirations, he kept his heart continually raised to God; and in difficult points redoubled with more earnestness his fervour in his prayers than his application to study. This he found attended with such success, that he often said that he had

[4] 2. 2dæ. q. 188. a. 5.

learned less by books than before his crucifix, or at the foot of the altar. His constant attention to God always filled his soul with joy, which appeared in his very countenance, and made his conversation altogether heavenly. His humility and obedience were most remarkable in all things. One day whilst he read at table, the corrector, by mistake, bid him read a word with a false quantity, and he readily obeyed, though he knew the error. When others told him he ought notwithstanding to have given it the right pronunciation, his answer was, "It matters not how a word is pronounced, but "to practise on all occasions humility and obedience is of the "greatest importance." He was so perfectly mortified, and dead to his senses, that he eat without reflecting either on the kind or quality of his food, so that after meals he often knew not what he had been eating.

In the year 1248, being twenty-two years of age, he was appointed by the general chapter to teach at Cologne, together with his old master Albertus, whose high reputation he equalled in his very first lessons. He then also began to publish his first works, which consist of comments on the Ethics, and other philosophical works of Aristotle. No one was more courteous and affable, but it was his principle to shun all unnecessary visits. To prepare himself for holy orders he redoubled his watchings, prayer, and other spiritual exercises. His devotion to the blessed Sacrament was extraordinary. He spent several hours of the day and part of the night before the altar, humbling himself in acts of profound adoration, and melting with love in contemplation of the immense charity of that Man-God, whom he there adored. In saying mass he seemed to be in raptures, and often quite dissolved in tears; a glowing frequently appeared in his eyes and countenance which shewed the ardour with which his heart burnt within him. His devotion was most fervent during the precious moments after he had received the divine mysteries; and after saying mass he usually served at another, or at least heard one. This fire and zeal appeared also in his sermons, at Cologne, Paris, Rome, and in other cities of Italy. He was every where heard as an angel; even the Jews ran of their own accord to hear him, and many of them

were converted. His zeal made him solicitous, in the first place, for the salvation of his relations. His example and exhortations induced them to an heroic practice of piety. His eldest sister consecrated herself to God in St. Mary's at Capua, and died abbess of that monastery: the younger, Theodora, married the count of Marsico, and lived and died in great virtue; as did his mother. His two brothers, Landulph and Reynold, became sincere penitents; and having some time after left the emperor's service, he in revenge burnt Aquino, their seat, in 1250, and put Reynold to death; the rest were obliged to save themselves by a voluntary banishment, but were restored in 1268. St. Thomas, after teaching four years at Cologne, was sent, in 1252, to Paris. His reputation for perspicuity and solidity drew immediately to his school a great number of auditors.[a] St. Thomas, with great reluctancy, compelled by holy obedience, consented to

[a] The manner of teaching then was not as it is generally at present, by dictating lessons, which the scholars write, but it was according to the practice that still obtains in some public schools, as in Padua, &c. The master delivered his explanation like an harangue; the scholars retained what they could, and often privately took down short notes to help their memory. Academical degrees were then also very different from what they now are; being conferred on none but those who taught. To be Master of Arts, a man must have studied six years at least, and be twenty-one years old. And to be qualified for teaching divinity, he must have studied eight years more, and be at least thirty-five years old. Nevertheless St. Thomas, by a dispensation of the university, on account of his distinguished merit, was allowed to teach at twenty-five. The usual way was for one named bachelor to explain the Master of the Sentences for a year in the school of some doctor, upon whose testimony, after certain rigorous public examinations and other formalities, the bachelor was admitted to the degree of licentiate; which gave him the license of a doctor to teach or hold a school himself. Another year, which was likewise employed in expounding the Master of the Sentences, completed the degree of doctor, which the candidate received from the chancellor of the university, and then opened a school in form, with a bachelor to teach under him. In 1253 St. Thomas began to teach as licentiate; but a stop was put to his degrees for some time, by a violent disagreement between the regulars, principally Dominicans and Franciscans, and the university which had at first admitted them into their body, and even given the Dominicans a college. In these disputes, St. Thomas was not spared, but he for a long time had recourse to no other vindication of himself than that of modesty and silence. On Palm-sunday he was preaching in the Dominicans church of St. James, when a beadle coming in commanded silence, and read a long written invective against him and his colleagues. When he had done, the saint, without speaking one word to justify himself or his Order, continued his sermon with the greatest tranquillity and unconcern of mind. William de Saint-Amour, the most violent among the secular doctors, published a book On the Dangers of the latter Times, a bitter invective against the mendicant Orders, which St. Lewis sent to pope Alexander IV. SS. Thomas and Bonaventure were sent into Italy to defend their Orders. And to confute that book, Saint Thomas published his nineteenth Opus-

be admitted doctor, on the twenty-third of October, in 1257, being then thirty-one years old. The professors of the university of Paris being divided about the question of the accidents remaining really, or only in appearance, in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, they agreed, in 1258, to consult our saint. The young doctor, not puffed up by such an honour, applied himself first to God by prayer, then he wrote upon that question the treatise still extant, and, carrying it to the church, laid it on the altar. The most ancient author of his life assures us, that while the saint remained in prayer on that occasion, some of the brethren who were present, saw him raised a little above the ground. (5)

The holy king St. Lewis had so great an esteem for St. Thomas, that he consulted him in affairs of state, and ordinarily informed him, the evening before, of any affair of importance that was to be treated of in council, that he might be the more ready to give advice on the point. The saint avoided the honour of dining with the king as often as he could excuse himself; and, when obliged to assist at court, appeared there as recollected as in his convent. One day at the king's table the saint cried out: "The argument is conclusive against the Manichees."(6) His prior, being with him, bade him remember where he was. The saint would have asked the king's pardon, but that good prince, fearing he should forget the argument that had occurred to his mind, caused his secretary to write it down for him. In the year 1259, St. Thomas assisted at the thirty-sixth general chapter of his Order, held at Valenciennes, which deputed him, in conjunction with Albertus Magnus and three others, to draw up rules for

(5) Gul. Tocco.—(6) Conclusum est contra Manichæos.

culum, with an Apology for the mendicant Orders, shewing they lay under no precept that all should apply themselves to manual labour, and that spiritual occupations were even preferable. The pope, upon this apology, condemned the book, and also another called the Eternal Gospel, in defence of the error of the abbot Joachim, who had advanced that the church was to have an end, and be succeeded by a new church which should be formed perfectly according to the spirit: this heresy and the errors of certain other fanatics were refuted by our saint at Rome. In his return to Paris, a violent storm terrified all the mariners and passengers, only Thomas appeared without the least fear, and continued in quiet prayer till the tempest had ceased. William de Saint-Amour being banished Paris, peace was restored to the university.

studies, which are still extant in the acts of that chapter. Returning to Paris he there continued his lectures. Nothing was more remarkable than his meekness on all occasions. His temper was never ruffled in the heat of any dispute, nor by any insult. It was owing to this sweetness, more than to his invincible force of reasoning, that he brought a young doctor to retract on the spot a dangerous opinion, which he was maintaining a second time in his thesis. In 1261, Urban IV. called St. Thomas to Rome, and by his order the general appointed him to teach here. His holiness pressed him with great importunity to accept of some ecclesiastical dignity, but he knew how much safer it is to refuse than to accept a bishoprick. The pope, however, obliged him always to attend his person. Thus it happened, that the saint taught and preached in all the towns where that pope ever resided, as in Rome, Viterbo, Orvieto, Fondi, and Perugia. He also taught at Bologna, Naples, &c.[b]

The fruits of his preaching were no less wonderful than those of his pen. Whilst he was preaching on Good-Friday on the love of God for man, and our ingratitude to him, his

[b] The works of St. Thomas are partly philosophical, partly theological; with some comments on the holy scriptures, and several treatises of piety. The elegance of Plato gave his philosophy the greater vogue among the gentiles; and the most learned of the christian fathers were educated in the maxims of his school. His noble sentiments on the attributes of the Deity, particularly his providence, and his doctrine on the rewards and punishments in a future state, seemed favourable to religion. Nor can it be doubted but he had learned, in his travels in Egypt and Phœnicia, many traditional truths delivered down from the patriarchal ages before the corruptions of idolatry. On the other hand, the philosophy of Aristotle was much less in request among the heathens, was silent as to all traditional truths, and contained some glaring errors which several heretics of the first ages adopted against the gospel. On which account he is called by Tertullian the Patriarch of heretics, and his works were proscribed by a council of Paris, about the year 1209. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged, by all impartial judges, that Aristotle was the greatest and most comprehensive genius of antiquity, and perhaps of any age: and he was the only one that had laid down complete rules, and explained the laws of reasoning, and had given a thorough system of philosophy. Boëtius had penetrated the depth of his genius, and the usefulness of his logics; yet did not redress his mistakes. Human reasoning is too weak without the light of revelation; and Aristotle, by relying too much on it, fell into the same gross errors. Not only many ancient heretics, but also several in the twelfth and thirteenth ages, as Peter Abaillard, the Albigenses, and other heretics made a bad use of his philosophy. But above all, the Saracens of Arabia and Spain wrote with incredible subtilty on his principles. St. Thomas opposed the enemies of truth with their own weapons, and employed the philosophy of Aristotle in defence of the faith, in which he succeeded to a miracle. He discerned and confuted his errors, and set in a clear and new light

whole auditory melted into tears to such a degree, that he was obliged to stop several times, that they might recover themselves. His discourse on the following Sunday concerning the glory of Christ, and the happiness of those who rise with him by grace, was no less pathetic and affecting. William of Tocco adds, that as the saint was coming out of St. Peter's church the same day, a woman was cured of the bloody flux by touching the hem of his garment. The conversion of two considerable Rabbins seemed still a greater miracle. St. Thomas had held a long conference with them at a casual meeting in cardinal Richard's villa, and they agreed to resume it the next day. The saint spent the foregoing

the great truths of reason which that philosopher had often wrapt up in obscurity. Thus Aristotle, who had been called the terror of Christians, in the hands of Thomas became orthodox, and furnished faith with new arms against idolatry and atheism. For this admirable doctor, though he had only a bad Latin translation of the works of that philosopher, has corrected his errors, and shewn that his whole subtile system of philosophy, as far as it is grounded in truth, is subservient to divine revelation. This he has executed through the nicest metaphysical speculations in the five first volumes of his works. He every where strikes out a new tract for himself, and enters into the most secret recesses of this shadowy region; so as to appear new even on known and beaten subjects. For his writings are original efforts of genius and reflection, and every point he handles in a manner that makes it appear new. If his speculations are sometimes spun fine, and his divisions run to niceties, this was the fault of the age in which he lived, and of the speculative refining geniuses of the Arabians, whom he had undertaken to pursue and confute throughout their whole system. His comments on the four books of the Master of the Sentences, contain a methodical course of theology, and make the sixth and seventh volumes of his works; the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth give us his Summ, or incomparable abridged body of divinity, though this work he never lived to finish. Among the fathers, St. Austin is principally his guide; so that the learned cardinals, Norris and Aguirre, call St. Thomas his most faithful interpreter. He draws the rules of practical duties and virtues principally from the morals of St. Gregory on Job. He composed his Summ against the Gentiles, at the request of St. Raymund of Pennafort, to serve the preachers in Spain in converting the Jews and Saracens to the faith. He wrote comments on most parts of the holy scripture, especially on the epistles of St. Paul, in which latter he seemed to outdo himself. By the order of pope Urban IV. he compiled the office of the Blessed Sacrament, which the church uses to this day, on the feast and during the octave of Corpus-Christi. His Opuscula, or lesser treatises, have in view the confutation of the Greek schismatics and several heresies; or discuss various points of philosophy and theology; or are comments on the creed, sacraments, decalogue, Lord's prayer, and Hail Mary. In his treatises of piety he reduces the rules of an interior life to these two gospel maxims; first, That we must strenuously labour by self-denial and mortification to extinguish in our hearts all the sparks of pride, and the inordinate love of creatures; secondly, That by assiduous prayer, meditation, and doing the will of God in all things, we must kindle his perfect love in our souls. (Opusc. 17 & 18.) His works are printed in 19 volumes folio.

night in prayer at the foot of the altar. The next morning these two most obstinate Jews came to him of their own accord, not to dispute, but to embrace the faith, and were followed by many others. In the year 1263 the Dominicans held their fortieth general chapter in London; St. Thomas assisted at it, and obtained soon after to be dismissed from teaching. He rejoiced to see himself reduced to the state of a private religious man. Pope Clement IV. had such a regard for him, that in 1265, among other ecclesiastical preferments he made him an offer of the archbishoprick of Naples, but could not prevail with him to accept of that or any other. The first part of his theological Summ St. Thomas composed at Bologna: he was called thence to Naples. Here it was that, according to Tocco and others, Dominick Caserte beheld him, while in fervent prayer, raised from the ground, and heard a voice from the crucifix directed to him in these words: "Thou hast written well of me, Thomas: what re-"compense dost thou desire?" He answered: "No other "than thyself, O Lord." (c)

From the sixth of December, in 1273, to the seventh of March following, the day of his death, he neither dictated nor wrote any thing on theological matters. He from that time laid aside his studies to fix his thoughts and heart entirely on eternity, and to aspire with the greatest ardour and most languishing desires to the enjoyment of God in perfect love. Pope Gregory X. had called a general council, the second of Lyons, with the view of extinguishing the Greek schism, and raising succours to defend the holy land against the Saracens. The ambassadors of the emperor Michael Palæologus, together with the Greek prelates, were to assist at it. The council was to meet on the first of May in 1274. His Holiness, by brief directed to our saint, ordered him to repair thither, and to prepare himself to defend the catholic cause against the Greek schismatics. Though indisposed, he set out from Naples about the end of January. His dear friend, F. Reynold of Piperno, was appointed his companion,

(c) Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma: quam mercedem accipies? Non aliam, nisi te, Domine.

and ordered to take care that he did not neglect himself, which the saint was apt to do. St. Thomas on the road called at the castle of Magenza, the seat of his niece Francisca of Aquino, married to the count of Cecan. Here his distemper increased, which was attended with a loss of appetite. One day he said, to be rid of their importunities, that he thought he could eat a little of a certain fish which he had formerly eaten in France, but which was not easily to be found in Italy. Search however was made, and the fish procured; but the saint refused to touch it, in imitation of David on the like occasion. Soon after his appetite returned a little, and his strength with it; yet he was assured that his last hour was at hand. This however did not hinder him from proceeding on his journey, till his fever increasing, he was forced to stop at Fossa-Nuova, a famous abbey of the Cistercians, in the diocess of Terracina, where formerly stood the city called Forum Appii. Entering the monastery, he went first to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, according to his custom. He poured forth his soul with extraordinary fervour, in the presence of Him who now called him to his kingdom. Passing thence into the cloister, which he never lived to go out of, he repeated these words:[6] *This is my rest for ages without end.* He was lodged in the abbot's apartment, where he lay ill for near a month. The good monks treated him with uncommon veneration and esteem, and as if he had been an angel from heaven. They would not employ any of their servants about him, but chose to serve him themselves in the meanest offices, as in cutting or carrying wood for him to burn, &c. His patience, humility, constant recollection and prayer were equally their astonishment and edification.

The nearer he saw himself to the term of all his desires, the entering into the joy of his Lord, the more tender and inflamed were his longings after death. He had continually in his mouth these words of St. Austin,[7] "Then shall I truly "live, when I shall be quite filled with you alone, and your "love: now I am a burden to myself, because I am not en- "tirely full of you." In such pious transports of heavenly

[6] Psalm cxxxi. 14.—[7] Conf. l. 10. c. 28.

love he never ceased sighing after the glorious day of eternity. The monks begged he would dictate an exposition of the book of Canticles, in imitation of St. Bernard. He answered: "Give me St. Bernard's spirit, and I will obey." But at last, to renounce perfectly his own will, he dictated the exposition of that most mysterious of all the divine books. It begins: Solomon inspiratus: It is not what his erudition might have suggested, but what love inspired him with in his last moments, when his pure soul was hastening to break the chains of mortality, and drown itself in the ocean of God's immensity, and in the delights of eternity.[d] The holy doctor at last finding himself too weak to dictate any more, begged the religious to withdraw, recommending himself to their prayers, and desiring their leave to employ the few precious moments he had to live with God alone. He accordingly spent them in fervent acts of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, humility and repentance. He made a general confession of his whole life to F. Reynold, with abundance of tears for his imperfections and sins of frailty; for in the judgment of those to whom he had manifested his interior, he had never offended God by any mortal sin. And he said to F. Reynold, before his death, that he thanked God with his whole heart for having prevented him with his grace, and always conducted him as it were by the hand, and preserved him from any known sin that destroys charity in the soul; adding, that this was purely God's mercy to which he was indebted for his preservation from every sin which he had not committed.[e] Having received absolution in the sentiments of the most perfect penitent, he desired the Viaticum. Whilst the abbot and community were preparing to bring it, he begged to be taken off his bed, and laid upon ashes spread upon the floor. Thus lying on the ground, weak in body but vigorous in mind, he waited for the priest with tears of the most tender devotion. When he saw the host in the priest's hand, he said: "I firmly

[d] There is another commentary on the same book which sometimes bears his name, and begins: Sonet vox tua in auribus meis; which was not the work of this saint but of Haymo, bishop of Halberstadt. See Echard, t. 1. p. 323. Touron, p. 714. Le Long, Bibl. Sacra, p. 766.

[e] Tibi debeo et quod non feci. Saint Aug.

" believe, that Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, is pre-
" sent in this august sacrament. I adore you my God, and
" my Redeemer: I receive You, the price of my redemption,
" the Viaticum of my pilgrimage; for whose honour I have
" studied, laboured, preached, and taught. I hope I never
" advanced any tenet as your word, which I had not learned
" from you. If through ignorance I have done otherwise,
" I revoke every thing of that kind, and submit all my writ-
" ings to the judgment of the holy Roman church." Then recollecting himself, after other acts of faith, adoration and love, he received the holy Viaticum; but remained on the ashes till he had finished his thanksgiving. Growing still weaker, amidst his transports of love, he desired extreme-unction, which he received, answering himself to all the prayers. After this, he lay in peace and joy as appeared by the serenity of his countenance; and he was heard to pronounce these aspirations: " Soon, soon will the God of all
" comfort complete his mercies on me, and fill all my desires.
" I shall shortly be satiated in him, and drink of the torrent
" of his delights: be inebriated from the abundance of his
" house, and in him who is the source of life, I shall behold
" the true light." Seeing all in tears about him he comforted them, saying: Death was his gain and his joy. F. Reynold said, he had hoped to see him triumph over the adversaries of the church in the council of Lyons, and placed in a rank in which he might do it some signal service. The saint answered: " I have begged of God, as the greatest favour, to
" die a simple religious man, and I now thank him for it.
" It is a greater benefit than he has granted to many of his
" holy servants, that he is pleased to call me out of this
" world so early to enter into his joy; wherefore grieve not
" for me who am overwhelmed with joy." He returned thanks to the abbot and monks of Fossa-Nuova for their charity to him. One of the community asked him by what means we might live always faithful to God's grace. He answered: " Be assured that he who shall always walk faith-
" fully in his presence, always ready to give him an account
" of all his actions, shall never be separated from him by
" consenting to sin." These were his last words to men,

after which he only spoke to God in prayer, and gave up the ghost, on the seventh of March, in 1274, a little after midnight; some say in the fiftieth year of his age. But Ptolemy of Lucca, and other cotemporary authors say expressly in his forty-eighth, which also agrees with his whole history. He was very tall, and every way proportioned.

The concourse of people at the saint's funeral was extraordinary: several monks of that house, and many other persons, were cured by his relicks and intercession, of which many instances, juridically proved, are mentioned by William of Tocco, in the bull of his canonization, and other authors. The Bollandists give us other long authentic relations of the like miracles continued afterward, especially in the translations of those holy relicks. The university of Paris sent to the general and provincial of the Dominicans a letter of condolence upon his death, giving the highest commendations to the saint's learning and sanctity, and begging the treasure of his holy body. Naples, Rome, and many other universities, princes, and Orders, contended no less for it. One of his hands, uncorrupt, was cut off in 1288, and given to his sister the countess Theodora, who kept it in her domestic chapel of San Severino. After her death it was given to the Dominicans' convent of Salerno. After several contestations, pope Urban V. many years after his death, granted his body to the Dominicans to carry to Paris or Thoulouse, as Italy already possessed the body of St. Dominick at Bologna. The sacred treasure was carried privately into France, and received at Thoulouse in the most honourable manner: one hundred and fifty thousand people came to meet and conduct it into the city, having at their head Lewis, duke of Anjou, brother to king Charles V. the archbishops of Thoulouse and Narbonne, and many bishops, abbots, and noblemen. It rests now in the Dominicans' church at Thoulouse, in a rich shrine, with a stately Mausolæum over it, which reaches almost up to the roof of the church, and hath four faces. An arm of the saint was at the same time sent to the great convent of the Dominicans at Paris, and placed in St. Thomas's chapel in their church, which the king declared a royal chapel. The faculty of theology meets to assist at a

high mass there on the anniversary festival of the saint. The kingdom of Naples, after many pressing solicitations, obtained, in 1372, from the general chapter held at Thoulouse, a bone of the other arm of St. Thomas. It was kept in the church of the Dominicans at Naples till 1603, when the city being delivered from a public calamity by his intercession, it was placed in the metropolitan church among the relicks of the other patrons of the country. That kingdom, by the briefs of Pius V. in 1567, and of Clement VIII. in 1603, confirmed by Paul V. honours him as a principal patron. He was solemnly canonized by pope John XXII. in 1323. Pope Pius V. in 1567, commanded his festival and office to be kept equal with those of the four doctors of the western church.

Many in their studies, as in other occupations, take great pains to little purpose, often to draw from them the poison of vanity or error; or at least to drain their affections, and rather to nourish pride and other vices in the heart than to promote true virtue. Sincere humility and simplicity of heart are essential conditions for the sanctification of studies, and for the improvement of virtue by them. Prayer must also both go before and accompany them. St. Thomas spoke much to God by prayer, that God might speak to him by enlightening his understanding in his reading and studies; and he received in this what he asked in the other exercise. This prodigy of human wit, this unparalleled genius, which penetrated the most knotty difficulties in all the sciences, whether sacred or profane to which he applied himself, was accustomed to say, that he learned more at the foot of the crucifix than in books. We ought never to set ourselves to read or study any thing without having first made our morning meditation, and without imploring in particular the divine light in every thing we read; and seasoning our studies by frequent aspirations to God in them, and by keeping our souls in an humble attention to his presence. In intricate difficulties we ought more earnestly, prostrate at the foot of a crucifix, to ask of Christ the resolution of our doubts. We should thus receive, in the school of so good a master, that science which makes saints, by giving, with other sciences,

the true knowledge of God and ourselves, and purifying and kindling in the will the fire of divine love with the sentiments of humility and other virtues. By a little use, fervent aspirations to God will arise from all subjects in the dryest studies, and it will become easy, and as it were natural in them, to raise our heart earnestly to God, either despising the vain pursuits, or detesting the vanity, and deploring the blindness of the world, or aspiring after heavenly gifts, or begging light, grace, or the divine love. This is a maxim of the utmost importance in an interior or spiritual life, which otherwise, instead of being assisted, is entirely overwhelmed and extinguished by studies, whether profane or sacred, and in its place a spirit of self-sufficiency, vanity, and jealousy is contracted, and the seeds of all other spiritual vices secretly sown. Against this danger, St. Bonaventure warns all students strongly to be upon their guard, saying, "If a per- "son repeats often in his heart, *Lord, when shall I love thee?* "he will feel an heavenly fire kindled in his soul much more "than by a thousand bright thoughts or fine speculations on "divine secrets, on the eternal generation of the Word, or "the procession of the Holy Ghost."[8] Prayer and true virtue even naturally conduce to the perfection of learning, in every branch; for purity of the heart, and the disengagement of the affections from all irregular passions, render the understanding clear, qualify the mind to judge impartially of truth in its researches, divest it of many prejudices, the fatal sources of errors, and inspire a modest distrust in a person's own abilities and lights. Thus virtue and learning mutually assist and improve each other.

[8] St. Bonav. l. de Mysticâ Theol. a. ult.

SS. PERPETUA AND FELICITAS, MM.
WITH THEIR COMPANIONS.

From their most valuable genuine acts, quoted by Tertullian, l. de animâ, c. 55. and by St. Austin, serm. 280. 283. 294. The first part of these acts, which reaches to the eve of her martyrdom, was written by St. Perpetua. The vision of St. Saturus was added by him. The rest was subjoined by an eye-witness of their death. See Tillemont, t. 3. p. 139. Ceillier, t. 2. p. 213. These acts have been often republished: but are extant, most ample and correct, in Ruinart. They were publicly read in the churches of Africa, as appears from St. Austin, Serm. 180. See them vindicated from the suspicion of Montanism by Orsi, Vindicæ Act. SS. Perpetuæ et Felicitatis.

A. D. 203.

A VIOLENT persecution being set on foot by the emperor Severus, in 202, it reached Africa the following year; when, by order of Minutius Timinianus, (or Firminianus) five catechumens were apprehended at Carthage for the faith: namely Revocatus and his fellow-slave Felicitas, Saturninus, and Secundulus, and Vibia Perpetua. Felicitas was seven months gone with child; and Perpetua had an infant at her breast, was of a good family, twenty-two years of age, and married to a person of quality in the city. She had a father, a mother, and two brothers; the third, Dinocrates, died about seven years old. These five martyrs were joined by Saturus, probably brother to Saturninus, and who seems to have been their instructor: he underwent a voluntary imprisonment, because he would not abandon them. The father of St. Perpetua, who was a Pagan, and advanced in years, loved her more than all his other children. Her mother was probably a Christian, as was one of her brothers, the other a catechumen. The martyrs were for some days before their commitment kept under a strong guard in a private house: and the account Perpetua gives of their sufferings to the eve of their death, is as follows: "We were in the hands of our persecutors, when my father, out of the affection he bore me, made new efforts to shake my resolution. I said to him: 'Can that vessel, which you see,

"change its name?" He said: "No." I replied: "Nor "can I call myself any other than I am, that is to say, a "Christian." At that word my father in a rage fell upon me, as if he would have pulled my eyes out, and beat me: but went away in confusion, seeing me invincible: after this we enjoyed a little repose, and in that interval received baptism. The Holy Ghost, on our coming out of the water, inspired me to pray for nothing but patience under corporal pains. A few days after this we were put into prison: I was shocked at the horror and darkness of the place;[a] for till then I knew not what such sort of places were. We suffered much that day, chiefly on account of the great heat caused by the crowd, and the ill treatment we met with from the soldiers. I was moreover tortured with concern, for that I had not my infant. But the deacons, Tertius and Pomponius who assisted us, obtained, by money, that we might pass some hours in a more commodious part of the prison to refresh ourselves. My infant being brought to me almost famished, I gave it the breast. I recommended him afterward carefully to my mother, and encouraged my brother; but was much afflicted to see their concern for me. After a few days my sorrow was changed into comfort, and my prison itself seemed agreeable. One day my brother said to me: "Sister, I am persuaded that you are a peculiar "favourite of heaven: pray to God to reveal to you whether "this imprisonment will end in martyrdom or not, and ac- "quaint me of it." I, knowing God gave me daily tokens of his goodness, answered, full of confidence, I will inform you to-morrow. I therefore asked that favour of God, and had this vision. I saw a golden ladder which reached from earth to the heavens; but so narrow that only one could mount it at a time. To the two sides were fastened all sorts of iron instruments, as swords, lances, hooks, and knives; so that if any one went up carelessly he was in great danger of having his flesh torn by those weapons. At the foot of the ladder lay a dragon of an enormous size, who kept guard to

[a] The prisons of the ancient Romans, still to be seen in many old amphitheatres, &c. are dismal holes; having at most one very small aperture for light just enough to shew day.

turn back and terrify those that endeavoured to mount it. The first that went up was Saturus, who was not apprehended with us, but voluntarily surrendered himself afterward on our account: when he was got to the top of the ladder, he turned towards me and said: "Perpetua, I wait for you; "but take care lest the dragon bite you." I answered: "In "the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, he shall not hurt me. Then the dragon, as if afraid of me, gently lifted his head from under the ladder, and I, having got upon the first step, set my foot upon his head. Thus I mounted to the top, and there I saw a garden of an immense space, and in the middle of it a tall man sitting down dressed like a shepherd, having white hair. He was milking his sheep, surrounded with many thousands of persons clad in white. He called me by my name, bid me welcome, and gave me some curds made of the milk which he had drawn: I put my hands together and took and eat them; and all that were present said aloud, Amen. The noise awaked me, chewing something very sweet. As soon as I had related to my brother this vision, we both concluded that we should suffer death.

"After some days, a rumour, being spread that we were to be examined, my father came from the city to the prison overwhelmed with grief: "Daughter, said he, have pity on "my gray hairs, have compassion on your father, if I yet "deserve to be called your father; if I myself have brought "you up to this age: if you consider that my extreme love "of you, made me always prefer you to all your brothers, "make me not a reproach to mankind. Have respect for your "mother and your aunt; have compassion on your child that "cannot survive you; lay aside this resolution, this obstinacy, "lest you ruin us all: for not one of us will dare open "his lips any more if any misfortune befall you." He took me by the hands at the same time and kissed them; he threw himself at my feet in tears, and called me no longer daughter, but, my lady. I confess, I was pierced with sharp sorrow when I considered that my father was the only person of our family that would not rejoice at my martyrdom. I endeavoured to comfort him, saying: "Father, grieve not; "nothing will happen but what pleases God; for we are not

"at our own disposal." He then departed very much concerned. The next day, whilst we were at dinner, a person came all on a sudden to summon us to examination. The report of this was soon spread, and brought together a vast crowd of people into the audience chamber. We were placed on a sort of scaffold before the judge, who was Hilarian, procurator of the province, the proconsul being lately dead. All who were interrogated before me confessed boldly Jesus Christ. When it came to my turn, my father instantly appeared with my infant. He drew me a little aside, conjuring me in the most tender manner not to be insensible to the misery I should bring on that innocent creature to which I had given life. The president Hilarian joined with my father and said: "What! will neither the gray hairs of a father you "are going to make miserable, nor the tender innocence of "a child, which your death will leave an orphan, move you? "Sacrifice for the prosperity of the emperors." I replied, "I will not do it." "Are you then a Christian?" said Hilarian. I answered: "Yes, I am." As my father attempted to draw me from the scaffold, Hilarian commanded him to be beaten off, and he had a blow given him with a stick, which I felt as much as if I had been struck myself, so much was I grieved to see my father thus treated in his old age. Then the judge pronounced our sentence, by which we were all condemned to be exposed to wild beasts. We then joyfully returned to our prison; and as my infant had been used to the breast, I immediately sent Pomponius, the deacon, to demand him of my father, who refused to send him. And God so ordered it that the child no longer required to suck, nor did my milk incommode me." Secundulus, being no more mentioned, seems to have died in prison before this interrogatory. Before Hilarian pronounced sentence he had caused Saturus, Saturninus, and Revocatus to be scourged; and Perpetua and Felicitas to be beaten on the face. They were reserved for the shows which were to be exhibited for the soldiers in the camp, on the festival of Geta, who had been made Cæsar four years before by his father Severus, when his brother Caracalla was created Augustus.

St. Perpetua relates another vision with which she was favoured, as follows: "A few days after receiving sentence, when we were all together in prayer, I happened to name Dinocrates, at which I was astonished, because I had not before had him in my thoughts; and I that moment knew that I ought to pray for him. This I began to do with great fervour and sighing before God; and the same night I had the following vision: "I saw Dinocrates coming out of a dark place, where there were many others, exceeding hot and thirsty;" his face was dirty, his compexion pale, with the ulcer in his face of which he died at seven years of age, and it was for him that I had prayed. There seemed a great distance between him and me, so that it was impossible for us to come to each other. Near him stood a vessel full of water, whose brim was higher than the statue of an infant: he attempted to drink, but though he had water he could not reach it. This mightily grieved me, and I awoke. By this I knew my brother was in pain, but I trusted I could by prayer relieve him: so I began to pray for him, beseeching God with tears, day and night, that he would grant me my request; as I continued to do till we were removed to the camp prison: being destined for a public show on the festival of Cæsar Geta. The day we were in the stocks [b] I had this vision: I saw the place, which I had beheld dark before, now luminous; and Dinocrates, with his body very clean and well clad, refreshing himself, and instead of his wound a scar only. I awaked, and I knew he was relieved from his pain" [c]

[b] These stocks, called Nervus, were a wooden machine with many holes, in which the prisoners' feet were fastened and stretched to great distances, as to the fourth or fifth holes, for the increase of their torment. St. Perpetua remarks, they were chained, and also set in this engine during their stay in the camp-prison which seems to have been several days, in expectation of the day of the public shows.

[c] By the conclusions which St. Perpetua was led to make from her two visions, it evidently appears, that the church, in that early age, believed the doctrine of the expiation of certain sins after death, and prayed for the faithful departed. This must be allowed, even though it should be pretended that her visions were not from God. But neither St. Austin, nor any other ancient father, ever entertained the least suspicion on that head. Nor can we presume that the goodness of God would permit one full of such ardent love of him to be imposed upon in a point of this nature. The Oxonian editor of these acts knew not what other answer to make to this

"Some days after, Pudens the officer, who commanded the guards of the prison, seeing that God favoured us with many gifts, had a great esteem of us, and admitted many people to visit us for our mutual comfort. On the day of the public shows my father came to find me out, overwhelmed with sorrow. He tore his beard, he threw himself prostrate on the ground, cursed his years, and said enough to move any creature; and I was ready to die with sorrow to see my father in so deplorable a condition. On the eve of the shows I was favoured with the following vision. The deacon Pomponius, methought, knocked very hard at the prison-door, which I opened to him. He was clothed with a white robe, embroidered with innumerable pomegranates of gold. He said to me: "Perpetua, we "wait for you, come along." He then took me by the hand and led me through very rough places into the middle of the amphitheatre, and said: "Fear not." And, leaving me, said again: "I will be with you in a moment, and bear a "part with you in your pains." I was wondering the beasts were not let out against us, when there appeared a very ill-favoured Egyptian, who came to encounter me with others. But another beautiful troop of young men declared for me, and anointed me with oil for the combat. Then appeared a man of a prodigious stature, in rich apparel, having a wand in his hand like the masters of the gladia-"tors, and a green bough on which hung golden apples. Having ordered silence, he said that the bough should be my prize, if I vanquished the Egyptian: but that if he conquered me, he should kill me with his sword. After a

ancient testimony, than that St. Perpetua seems to have been a Montanist. (p. 14.) But this unjust censure Dedwell (Diss. Cypr. A. n. 8. p. 15.) and others have confuted. And could St. Austin, with the whole catholic church, have ranked a Montanist among the most illustrious martyrs? That father himself, in many places of his works, clearly explains the same doctrine of the catholic faith, concerning a state of temporary sufferings in the other world, and conformably to it speaks of these visions (l. de orig. animæ. l. 1. c. 10. p. 343. & l. 4. c. 18. p. 401. t. 10, &c.) He says, that Dinocrates must have received baptism, but afterward sinned, perhaps by having been seduced by his pagan father into some act of superstition, or by lying, or by some other faults of which children in that tender age may be guilty. Illius ætatis pueri et mentiri et verum loqui, et confiteri et negare jam possunt. Lib. 1. c. 10. See Orsi, Diss. de Actis SS. Perpetuæ & Felicitatis. Florentiæ, 1738, 4to.

long and obstinate engagement, I threw him on his face, and trod upon his head. The people applauded my victory with loud acclamations. I then approached the master of the amphitheatre, who gave me the bough with a kiss, and said: "Peace be with you, my daughter." After this I awoke, and found that I was not so much to combat with wild beasts as with the devils." Here ends the relation of St. Perpetua.

St. Saturus had also a vision which he wrote himself. He and his companions were conducted by a bright angel into a most delightful garden, in which they met some holy martyrs lately dead, namely, Jocundus, Saturninus, and Artaxius, who had been burned alive for the faith, and Quintus, who died in prison. They inquired after other martyrs of their acquaintance, say the acts, and were conducted into a most stately palace, shining like the sun: and in it saw the king of this most glorious place surrounded by his happy subjects, and heard a voice composed of many, which continually cried: "Holy, holy, holy." Saturus, turning to Perpetua, said: "You have here what you desired." She replied: "God be praised, I have more joy here than ever I had in the flesh." He adds, Going out of the garden they found before the gate, on the right hand, their bishop of Carthage, Optatus, and on the left, Aspacius, priest of the same church, both of them alone and sorrowful. They fell at the martyrs feet, and begged they would reconcile them together, for a dissention had happened between them. The martyrs embraced them, saying: "Are not you our bishop, and you a "priest of our Lord? It is our duty to prostrate ourselves be- "fore you." Perpetua was discoursing with them; but certain angels came and drove hence Optatus and Aspasius; and bade them not to disturb the martyrs, but be reconciled to each other. The bishop Optatus was also charged to heal the divisions that reigned among several of his church. The angels after these reprimands seemed ready to shut the gates of the garden. "Here," says he, "we saw many of our "brethren and martyrs likewise. We were fed with an inef- "fable odour, which delighted and satisfied us." Such was the vision of Saturus. The rest of the acts were added by an

eye-witness. God had called to himself Secondulus in prison. Felicitas was eight months gone with child, and as the day of the shows approached, she was inconsolable lest she should not be brought to bed before it came; fearing that her martyrdom would be deferred on that account, because women with child were not allowed to be executed before they were delivered: the rest also were sensibly afflicted on their part to leave her alone in the road to their common hope. Wherefore they unanimously joined in prayer to obtain of God that she might be delivered against the shows. Scarce had they finished their prayer, when Felicitas found herself in labour. She cried out under the violence of her pain: one of the guards asked her, if she could not bear the throes of child-birth without crying out, what she would do when exposed to the wild beasts. She answered: "It is I that suffer what I now suffer; but then "there will be another in me that will suffer for me, because "I shall suffer for him." She was then delivered of a daughter, which a certain christian woman took care of, and brought up as her own child. The tribune, who had the holy martyrs in custody, being informed by some persons of little credit, that the Christians would free themselves out of prison by some magic inchantments, used them the more cruelly on that account, and forbade any to see them. Thereupon Perpetua said to him: "Why do you not afford us some "relief, since we are condemned by Cæsar, and destined to "combat at his festival? Will it not be to your honour that "we appear well fed?" At this the tribune trembled and blushed, and ordered them to be used with more humanity, and their friends to be admitted to see them. Pudens, the keeper of the prison, being already converted, secretly did them all the good offices in his power. The day before they suffered they gave them, according to custom, their last meal, which was called a free supper, and they eat in public. But the martyrs did their utmost to change it into an Agape, or Love-feast. Their chamber was full of people, whom they talked to with their usual resolution, threatening them with the judgments of God, and extolling the happiness of their own sufferings. Saturus, smiling at the curiosity of those

that came to see them, said to them, "Will not to-morrow "suffice to satisfy your inhuman curiosity in our regard? "However you may seem now to pity us, to-morrow you will "clap your hands at our death, and applaud our murderers. "But observe well our faces, that you may know them again "at that terrible day when all men shall be judged." They spoke with such courage and intrepidity, as astonished the infidels, and occasioned the convertion of several among them.

The day of their triumph being come, they went out of the prison to go to the amphitheatre. Joy sparkled in their eyes, and appeared in all their gestures and words. Perpetua walked with a composed countenance and easy pace, as a woman cherished by Jesus Christ, with her eyes modestly cast down: Felicitas went with her, following the men, not able to contain her joy. When they came to the gate of the amphitheatre the guards would have given them, according to custom, the superstitious habits with which they adorned such as appeared at these sights. For the men, a red mantle, which was the habit of the priests of Saturn: for the women, a little fillet round the head, by which the priestesses of Ceres were known. The martyrs rejected those idolatrous ceremonies; and, by the mouth of Perpetua, said, they came thither of their own accord on the promise made them that they should not be forced to any thing contrary to their religion. The tribune then consented that they might appear in the amphitheatre habited as they were. Perpetua sung, as being already victorious; Revocatus, Saturninus, and Saturus threatened the people that beheld them with the judgments of God: and as they passed over against the balcony of Hilarian, they said to him; "You judge us in this world, "but God will judge you in the next." The people, enraged at their boldness, begged they might be scourged, which was granted. They accordingly passed before the Venatores, [d] or hunters, each of whom gave them a lash. They rejoiced

[d] Pro ordine venatorum. Venatores is the name given to those that were armed to encounter the beasts, who put themselves in ranks, with whips in their hands, and each of them gave a lash to the Bestiarii, or those condemned to the beasts, whom they obliged to pass naked before them in the middle of the pit, or arena.

exceedingly in being thought worthy to resemble our Saviour in his sufferings. God granted to each of them the death they desired; for when they were discoursing together about what kind of martyrdom would be agreeable to each, Saturninus declared that he would choose to be exposed to beasts of several sorts in order to the aggravation of his sufferings. Accordingly he and Revocatus, after having been attacked by a leopard, were also assaulted by a bear. Saturus dreaded nothing so much as a bear, and therefore hoped a leopard would despatch him at once with his teeth. He was then exposed to a wild boar, but the beast turned upon his keeper, who received such a wound from him that he died in a few days after, and Saturus was only dragged along by him. Then they tied the martyr to the bridge near a bear, but that beast came not out of his lodge, so that Saturus, being sound and not hurt, was called upon for a second encounter. This gave him an opportunity of speaking to Pudens, the jailor that had been converted. The martyr encouraged him to constancy in the faith, and said to him; "You see I have not yet been hurt by any beast, as I desired "and foretold; believe then steadfastly in Christ; I am going "where you will see a leopard with one bite take away my "life." It happened so, for a leopard being let out upon him covered him all over with blood, whereupon the people jeering, cried out; "He is well baptized." The martyr said to Pudens, "Go, remember my faith, and let our sufferings "rather strengthen than trouble you. Give me the ring you "have on your finger." Saturus, having dipt it in his wound, gave it him back to keep as a pledge to animate him to a constancy in his faith, and fell down dead soon after. Thus he went first to glory to wait for Perpetua, according to her vision. Some, with Mabillon,[5] think this Pudens is the martyr honoured in Africa, on the twenty-ninth of April.

In the mean time, Perpetua and Felicitas had been exposed to a wild cow; Perpetua was first attacked, and the cow having tossed her up, she fell on her back. Then putting herself in a sitting posture, and perceiving her clothes were

[5] Analect. t. 3. p. 403.

torn, she gathered them about her in the best manner she could, to cover herself, thinking more of decency than her sufferings. Getting up, not to seem disconsolate, she tied up her hair, which was fallen loose, and perceiving Felicitas on the ground much hurt by a toss of the cow, she helped her to rise. They stood together, expecting another assault from the beasts, but the people crying out, that it was enough, they were led to the gate Sanevivaria, where those that were not killed by the beasts were despatched at the end of the shows by the confectores. Perpetua was here received by Rusticus, a catechumen, who attended her. This admirable woman seemed just returning to herself out of a long ecstacy, and asked when she was to fight the wild cow. Being told what had passed, she could not believe it till she saw on her body and clothes the marks of what she had suffered, and knew the catechumen. With regard to this circumstance of her acts, St. Austin cries out; "Where was she when assaulted and "torn by so furious a wild beast, without feeling her wounds, "and when, after that furious combat, she asked when it "would begin? What did she, not to see what all the world "saw? What did she enjoy who did not feel such pain? By "what love, by what vision, by what potion was she so trans-"ported out of herself, and as it were divinely inebriated, "to seem without feeling in a mortal body?" She called for her brother, and said to him and Rusticus, "Continue firm "in the faith, love one another, and be not scandalized at "our sufferings." All the martyrs were now brought to the place of their butchery. But the people, not yet satisfied with beholding blood, cried out to have them brought into the middle of the amphitheatre, that they might have the pleasure of seeing them receive the last blow. Upon this, some of the martyrs rose up, and having given one another the kiss of peace, went of their own accord into the middle of the Arena; others were despatched without speaking, or stirring out of the place they were in. St. Perpetua fell into the hands of a very timorous and unskilful apprentice of the gladiators, who, with a trembling hand, gave her many slight wounds, which made her languish a long time, Thus, says St. Austin, did two women, amidst fierce beasts and the swords

of gladiators, vanquish the devil and all his fury. The day of their martyrdom was the seventh of March, as it is marked in the most ancient martyrologies, and in the Roman calendar as old as the year 354, published by Bucherius. St. Prosper says they suffered at Carthage, which agrees with all the circumstances. Their bodies were in the great church of Carthage, in the fifth age, as St. Victor[6] informs us. Saint Austin says, their festival drew yearly more to honour their memory in their church, than curiosity had done to their martyrdom. They are mentioned in the canon of the Mass.

ST. PAUL, ANCHORET.

From his ignorance of secular learning, and his extraordinary humility, he was surnamed the Simple. He served God in the world to the age of sixty, in the toils of a poor and laborious country life. The incontinency of his wife contributed to wean his soul from all earthly ties. Checks and crosses which men meet with in this life are great graces. God's sweet providence sows our roads with thorns, that we may learn to despise the vanity, and hate the treachery of the world. "When mothers would wean their children," says St. Austin, "they anoint their breasts with aloes, that "the babe being offended at the bitterness, may no more "seek the nipple." Thus has God in his mercy filled the world with sorrow and vexation; but woe to those who still continue to love it! Even in this life miseries will be the wages of their sin and folly, and their eternal portion will be the second death. Paul found true happiness because he converted his heart perfectly from the world to God. Desiring to devote himself totally to his love, he determined to betake himself to the great St. Antony. He went eight days' journey into the desert, to the holy patriarch, and begged that he would admit him among his disciples, and teach him the way of salvation. Antony harshly rejected him, telling him, he was too old to bear the austerities of that state. He therefore bade him return home, and follow the business of

[6] Victor l. 1. p. 4.

his calling, and sanctify it by the spirit of recollection and assiduous prayer. Having said this he shut his door: but Paul continued fasting and praying before his door, till Antony seeing his fervour, on the fourth day opened it again, and going out to him, after several trials of his obedience, admitted him to the monastic state, and prescribed him a rule of life; teaching him, by the most perfect obedience, to crucify in himself all attachment to his own will, the source of pride; by the denial of his senses and assiduous hard labour, to subdue his flesh; and by continual prayer at his work, and at other times, to purify his heart, and inflame it with heavenly affections.[1] He instructed him how to pray, and ordered him never to eat before sun-set, nor so much at a meal as entirely to satisfy hunger. Paul, by obedience and humility, laid the foundation of an eminent sanctity in his soul, which being dead to all self-will and to creatures, soared towards God with great fervour and purity of affections.

Among the examples of his ready obedience, it is recorded, that when he had wrought with great diligence in making mats and hurdles, praying at the same time without intermission, St. Antony disliked his work, and bade him undo it and make it over again. Paul did so, without any dejection in his countenance, or making the least reply, or even asking to eat a morsel of bread, though he had already passed seven days without taking any refreshment. After this, Antony ordered him to moisten in water four loaves of six ounces each; for their bread in the deserts was exceeding hard and dry. When their refection was prepared, instead of eating, he bade Paul sing psalms with him, then to sit down by the loaves, and at night, after praying together, to take his rest. He called him up at midnight to pray with him: this exercise the old man continued with great cheerfulness till three o'clock in the afternoon the following day. After sun-set, each eat one loaf, and Antony asked Paul if he would eat another. "Yes, if you do," said Paul; "I am "a monk," said Antony; "And I desire to be one," replied the disciple; whereupon they arose, sung twelve

[1] Pallad. Lausiac. c. 28. p. 942. Rufin. Vit. Patr. c. 31. Sozom. l. 1. c. 13.

psalms, and recited twelve other prayers. After a short repose, they both arose again to prayer at midnight. The experienced director exercised his obedience by frequent trials, bidding him one day, when many monks were come to visit him to receive his spiritual advice, to spill a vessel of honey, and then to gather it up without any dust. At other times he ordered him to draw water a whole day, and pour it out again; to make baskets and pull them to pieces; to sew and unsew his garments, and the like.[2] What victories over themselves and their passions might youth and others, &c. gain? what a treasure of virtue might they procure, by a ready and voluntary obedience and conformity of their will to that of those whom providence hath placed over them? This they would find the effectual means to crush pride, and subdue their passions. But obedience is of little advantage unless it bend the will itself, and repress all wilful interior murmuring and repugnance. When Paul had been sufficiently exercised and instructed in the duties of a monastic life, St. Antony placed him in a cell three miles from his own, where he visited him from time to time. He usually preferred his virtue to that of all his other disciples, and proposed him to them as a model. He frequently sent to Paul sick persons, or those possessed by the devil, whom he was not able to cure, as not having received the gift; and by the disciple's prayers they never failed of a cure. St. Paul died some time after the year 330. He is commemorated both by the Greeks and Latins, on the seventh of March. See Palladius, Rufinus, and Sozomen, abridged by Tillemont, t. 7. p. 144. Also by Henschenius, p. 645.

[2] Rufin. & Pallad. loc. cit.

MARCH VIII.

ST. JOHN OF GOD, C.

FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF CHARITY.

From his life written by Francis de Castro, twenty-five years after his death, abridged by Baillet, p. 92. and F. Helyot, Hist. des Ordres Relig. t. 4. p. 131.

A. D. 1550.

St. John, surnamed of God, was born in Portugal, in 1495. His parents were of the lowest rank in the country, but devout and charitable. John spent a considerable part of his youth in service, under the mayoral or chief shepherd of the count of Oropeusa in Castile, and in great innocence and virtue. In 1522, he listed himself in a company of foot raised by the count, and served in the wars between the French and Spaniards; as he did afterward in Hungary against the Turks whilst the emperor Charles V. was king of Spain. By the licentiousness of his companions he, by degrees, lost his fear of offending God, and laid aside the greatest part of his practices of devotion. The troop which he belonged to being disbanded, he went into Andalusia in 1536, where he entered the service of a rich lady near Seville, in quality of shepherd. Being now about forty years of age, stung with remorse for his past misconduct, he began to entertain very serious thoughts of a change of life, and doing penance for his sins. He accordingly employed the greatest part of his time, both by day and night, in the exercises of prayer and mortification; bewailing almost continually his ingratitude towards God, and deliberating how he could dedicate himself in the most perfect manner to his service. His compassion for the distressed moved him to take a resolution of leaving his place,

and passing into Africa, that he might comfort and succour the poor slaves there, not without hopes of meeting with the crown of martyrdom. At Gibraltar he met with a Portuguese gentleman condemned to banishment, and whose estate had also been confiscated by king John III. He was then in the hands of the king's officers, together with his wife and children, and on his way to Ceuta in Barbary, the place of his exile. John, out of charity and compassion, served him without any wages. At Ceuta the gentleman falling sick with grief and the change of air, was soon reduced to such straits as to be obliged to dispose of the small remains of his shattered fortune for the family's support. John, not content to sell what little stock he was master of to relieve them, went to day-labour at the public works, to earn all he could for their subsistence. The apostacy of one of his companions alarmed him; and his confessor telling him that his going in quest of martyrdom was an illusion, he determined to return to Spain. Coming back to Gibraltar, his piety suggested to him to turn pedlar, and sell little pictures and books of devotion, which might furnish him with opportunities of exhorting his customers to virtue. His stock increasing considerably, he settled in Granada, where he opened a shop in 1538, being then forty-three years of age.

The great preacher and servant of God, John D'Avila, [a]

[a] The venerable John of Avila, or Avilla, who may be called the father of the most eminent saints that flourished in Spain in the sixteenth century, was a native of the diocess of Toledo. At fourteen years of age he was sent to Salamanca, and trained up to the law. From his infancy he applied himself with great earnestness to prayer, and all the exercises of piety and religion; and he was yet very young when he found his inclinations strongly bent towards an ecclesiastical state, in order to endeavour by his tears and labours to kindle the fire of divine love in the hearts of men. From the university his parents called him home, but were surprised and edified to see the ardour with which he pursued the most heroic practices of Christian perfection; which, as they both feared God, they were afraid in the least to check, or damp his fervour. His diet was sparing, and as coarse as he could choose without an appearance of singularity or affectation; he contrived to sleep on twigs, which he secretly laid on his bed, wore an hair shirt, and used severe disciplines. What was most admirable in his conduct was the universal denial of his will, by which he laboured to die to himself, added to his perfect humility, patience, obedience and meekness, by which he subjected his spirit to the holy law of Christ. All his spare time was devoted to prayer, and he approached very frequently the holy sacraments. In that of the blessed Eucharist he began to find a wonderful relish and devotion, and he spent some hours in preparing himself to receive it with the

surnamed the Apostle of Andalusia, preached that year at Granada on St. Sebastian's day, which is there kept as a great

utmost purity of heart and fervour of love he was able to bring to that divine banquet. In the commerce of the world he appeared so much out of his element, that he was sent to the university of Alcala, where he finished his studies in the same manner he had begun them, and bore the first prize in philosophy and his other classes. F. Dominic Soto, the learned Dominican professor, who was his master, conceived for him the warmest affection and the highest esteem, and often declared how great a man he doubted not this scholar would one day become. Peter Guerrera, who was afterward archbishop of Toledo, was also from that time his great admirer, and constant friend. Both his parents dying about that time, John entered into holy orders. On the same day on which he said his first mass, instead of giving an entertainment according to the custom, he provided a dinner for twelve poor persons, on whom he waited at table, and whom he clothed at his own expense, and with his own hands. When he returned into his own country, he sold his whole estate, for he was the only child and heir of his parents: the entire price he gave to the poor, reserving nothing for himself besides an old suit of mean apparel, desiring to imitate the apostles, whom Christ forbade to carry either purse or scrip. Taking St. Paul for his patron and model, he entered upon the ministry of preaching, to which sublime function his preparation consisted not merely in the study and exercise of oratory, and in a consummate knowledge of faith, and of the rules of Christian virtue, but much more in a perfect victory over himself and his passions, the entire disengagement of his heart and affections from the world and all earthly things, an eminent spirit of humility, tender charity, and inflamed zeal for the glory of God, and the sanctification of souls. He once said to a young clergyman, who consulted him by what method he could learn the art of preaching with fruit, that it was no other than that of the most ardent love of God. Of this he was himself a most illustrious example. Prayer and an indefatigable application to the duties of his ministry divided his whole time, and such was his thirst of the salvation of souls that the greatest labours and dangers were equally his greatest gain and pleasure: he seemed even to gather strength from the former, and confidence and courage from the latter. His inflamed sermons, supported by the admirable example of his heroic virtue, and the most pure maxims of the gospel, delivered with an eloquence and an unction altogether divine, from the overflowings of an heart burning with the most ardent love of God, and penetrated with the deepest sentiments of humility and compunction, had a force which the most hardened hearts seemed not able to withstand. Many sacred orators preach themselves rather than the word of God, and speak with so much art and care, that their hearers consider more how they speak than what they say. This true minister of the gospel never preached or instructed others without having first, for a considerable time begged of God with great earnestness to move both his tongue and the hearts of his hearers: he mounted the pulpit full of the most sincere distrust in his own abilities and endeavours, and contempt of himself, and with the most ardent thirst of the salvation of the souls of all his hearers. He cast his nets, or rather sowed the seed, of eternal life. The Holy Ghost, who inspired and animated his soul, seemed to speak by the organ of his voice; and gave so fruitful a blessing to his words, that wonderful were the conversions which he every where wrought. Whole assemblies came from his sermons quite changed, and their change appeared immediately in their countenances and behaviour. He never ceased to exhort those that were with him by his inflamed discourses, and the absent by his letters. A collection of these, extant in several languages, is a proof of his eloquence, experimental science of virtue, and tender and affecting charity. The ease with which he wrote them without study, shews how richly his

festival. John having heard his sermon, was so affected with it, that, melting into tears, he filled the whole church with

mind was stored with an inexhausted fund of excellent motives and reflections on every subject-matter of piety, with what readiness he disposed those motives in an agreeable methodical manner, and with what unction he expressed them, insomuch that his style appears to be no other than the pure language of his heart, always bleeding for his own sins and those of the world. So various are the instructions contained in these letters, that any one may find such as are excellently suited to his particular circumstances, whatever virtue he desires to obtain, or vice to shun, and under whatever affliction he seeks for holy advice and comfort. It was from the school of an interior experienced virtue that he was qualified to be so excellent a master. This spirit of all virtues he cultivated in his soul by their continual exercise. Under the greatest importunity of business, besides his office and mass, with a long preparation and thanksgiving, he never failed to give to private holy meditation two hours, when he first rose in the morning, from three till five o'clock, and again two hours in the evening before he took his rest, for which he never allowed himself more than four hours of the night from eleven till three o'clock. During the time of his sickness, toward the latter end of his life, almost his whole time was devoted to prayer, he being no longer able to sustain the fatigue of his functions. His clothes were always very mean, and usually old; his food was such as he bought in the streets, which wanted no dressing, as herbs, fruit, or milk; for he would never have a servant. At the tables of others he eat sparingly of whatever was given him, or what was next at hand. He exceedingly extolled, and was a true lover of holy poverty, not only as it is an exercise of penance, and cuts off the root of many passions, but also as a state dear to those who love our divine Redeemer, who was born, lived, and died in extreme poverty. Few persons ever appeared to be more perfectly dead to the world than this holy man. A certain nobleman, who was shewing him his curious gardens, canals, and buildings, expressed his surprise to see that no beauties and wonders of art and nature could fix his attention or raise his curiosity. The holy man replied, "I must "confess that nothing of this kind gives "me any satisfaction, because my heart "takes no pleasure in them." This holy man was so entirely possessed with God, and filled with the love of invisible things, as to loathe all earthly things which seemed not to have a direct and immediate tendency to them. He preached at Seville, Cordova, Granada, Bæza, and over the whole country of Andalusia. By his discourses and instructions, St. John of God, St. Francis of Borgia, St. Teresa, Lewis of Granada, and many others were moved, and assisted to lay the deep foundation of perfect virtue to which the divine grace raised them. Many noblemen and ladies were directed by him in the paths of Christian perfection, particularly the Countess of Feria and the Marchioness of Pliego, whose conduct first in a married state, and afterward in holy widowhood, affords most edifying instances of heroic practices and sentiments of all virtues. This great servant of God taught souls to renounce and cast away that false liberty by which they are the worst of slaves under the tyranny of their passions, and to take up the sweet chains of the divine love which gives men a true sovereignty, not only over all other created things, but also over themselves. He lays down in his works the rules by which he conducted so many to perfect virtue, teaching us that we must learn to know both God and ourselves, not by the lying glass of self-love, but by the clear beam of truth: ourselves, that we may see the depth of our miseries, and fly with all our might from the cause thereof, which is our pride, and other sins: God, that we may always tremble before his infinite majesty, may believe his unerring truth, may hope for a share in his inexhausted mercy, and may vehemently love that incomprehensible abyss of goodness and charity. These lessons he lays down

his cries and lamentations; detesting his past life, beating his breast, and calling aloud for mercy. Not content with this, he ran about the streets like a distracted person, tearing

with particular advice how to subside our passions, in his treatise on the Audi filia, or on those words of the Holy Ghost, (Psal. xliv.) *Hear me, daughter, bend thine ear, forget thy house*, &c. The occasion upon which he composed this book was as follows: Donna Sancha Carilla, daughter of Don Lewis Fernandez of Corduba, lord of Guadalcazar, a young lady of great beauty and accomplishments, was called to court to serve in quality of lady of honour to the queen. Her father furnished her with an equipage, and every thing suitable; but before her journey she went to cast herself at the feet of Avila, and make her confession. She afterward said he reproved her sharply for coming to the sacred tribunal of penance too richly attired, and in a manner not becoming a penitent whose heart was broken with compunction. What else passed in their conference is unknown; but coming from the church, she begged to be excused from going to court, laid aside all sumptuous attire, and gave herself up entirely to recollection and penance. Thus she led a retired most holy life in her father's house till she died, most happily, about ten years after. Her pious director wrote this book for her instruction in the practice of an interior life, teaching her how she ought to subdue her passions, and vanquish temptations, especially that of pride: also by what means she was to labour to obtain the love of God, and all virtues. He dwells at length on assiduous meditation, on the passion of Christ, especially on the excess of love with which he suffered so much for us. His other works, and all the writers who speak of this holy man, bear testimony to his extraordinary devotion towards the passion of Christ. From this divine book he learned the perfect spirit of all virtues, especially a desire of suffering with him and for him. Upon this motive he exhorts us to give God many thanks when he sends us an opportunity of enduring some little, that by our good use of this little trial, our Lord may be moved to give us strength to suffer more, and may send us more to undergo. Envy raising him enemies, he was accused of shutting heaven to the rich, and upon that senseless slander thrown into the prison of the inquisition at Seville. This sensible disgrace and persecution he bore with incredible sweetness and patience, and after he was acquitted, returned only kindnesses to his calumniators. In the 50th year of his age he began to be afflicted with the stone, frequent fevers, and a complication of other painful disorders: under the sharpest pains he used often to repeat this prayer, "Lord, increase my sufferings; but give me also patience." Once in a fit of exquisite pain he begged our Redeemer to assuage it; and that instant he found it totally removed, and he fell into a gentle slumber. He afterward reproached himself as guilty of pusillanimity. It is not to be expressed how much he suffered from sickness during the seventeen last years of his life. He died with great tranquillity and devotion on the tenth of May, 1569.—The venerable John of Avila was a man powerful in words and works, a prodigy of penance, the glory of the priesthood, the edification of the church by his virtues, its support by his zeal, its oracle by his doctrine. A profound and universal genius, a prudent and upright director, a celebrated preacher, the apostle of Andalusia; a man revered by all Spain, known to the whole Christian world. A man of such sanctity and, authority that princes adopted his decisions, the learned were improved by his enlightened knowledge, and St. Teresa regarded him as her patron and protector, consulted him as her master, and followed him as her guide and model. See the edifying life of the venerable John of Avila, wrote by F. Lewis of Granada; also by Lewis Munnoz; and the abstract prefixed by Arnauld d'Andilly to the French edition of his works in folio, at Paris, in 1673.

his hair, and behaving in such a manner that he was followed every where by the rabble with sticks and stones, and came home all besmeared with dirt and blood. He then gave away all he had in the world, and having thus reduced himself to absolute poverty, that he might die to himself and crucify all the sentiments of the old man, he began again to counterfeit the madman, running about the streets as before, till some had the charity to take him to the venerable John D'Avila, covered with dirt and blood. The holy man, full of the spirit of God, soon discovered in John the motions of extraordinary graces, spoke to him in private, heard his general confession, and gave him proper advice, and promised his assistance ever after. John, out of a desire of the greatest humiliations, returned soon after to his apparent madness and extravagancies. He was thereupon taken up and put into a madhouse on supposition of his being disordered in his senses, where the severest methods were used to bring him to himself, all which he underwent in the spirit of penance, and by way of atonement for the sins of his past life. D'Avila being informed of his conduct, came to visit him, and found him reduced almost to the grave by weakness, and his body covered with wounds and sores; but his soul was still vigorous, and thirsting with the greatest ardour after new sufferings and humiliations. D'Avila however told him, that having now been sufficiently exercised in that so singular a method of penance and humiliation, he advised him to employ himself for the time to come in something more conducive to his own and the public good. His exhortation had its desired effect; and he grew instantly calm and sedate, to the great astonishment of his keepers. He continued however some time longer in the hospital, serving the sick, but left it entirely on St. Ursula's day, in 1539. This his extraordinary conduct is an object of our admiration, not of our imitation: in this saint it was the effect of the fervour of his conversion, his desire of humiliation, and a holy hatred of himself and his past criminal life. By it he learned in a short time perfectly to die to himself and the world; which prepared his soul for the graces which God afterward bestowed on him. He then thought of executing his design

of doing something for the relief of the poor; and, after a pilgrimage to our Lady's in Guadaloupa, to recommend himself and his undertaking to her intercession, in a place celebrated for devotion to her, he began by selling wood in the market-place, to feed some poor by the means of his labour. Soon after he hired a house to harbour poor sick persons in, whom he served and provided for with an ardour, prudence, economy, and vigilance that surprised the whole city. This was the foundation of the Order of Charity, in 1540, which, by the benediction of heaven, has since been spread all over Christendom. John was occupied all day in serving his patients: in the night he went out to carry in new objects of charity, rather than to seek out provisions for them; for people of their own accord brought him in all necessaries for his little hospital. The archbishop of Granada taking notice of so excellent an establishment, and admiring the incomparable order observed in it, both for the spiritual and temporal care of the poor, furnished considerable sums to increase it, and favoured it with his protection. This excited all persons to vie with each other in contributing to it. Indeed the charity, patience, and modesty of St. John, and his wonderful care and foresight, engaged every one to admire and favour the institute. The bishop of Tuy, president of the royal court of judicature in Granada, having invited the holy man to dinner, put several questions to him, to all which he answered in such a manner, as gave the bishop the highest esteem of his person. It was this prelate that gave him the name of John of God, and prescribed him a kind of habit, though St. John never thought of founding a religious Order: for the rules which bear his name were only drawn up in 1556, six years after his death; and religious vows were not introduced among his brethren before the year 1570.

To make trial of the saint's disinterestedness, the marquis of Tarisa came to him in disguise, to beg an alms on pretence of a necessary law-suit, and he received from his hands twenty-five ducats, which was all he had. The marquis was so much edified by his charity, that, besides returning the sum, he bestowed on him one hundred and fifty crowns of gold, and sent to his hospital, every day during his stay at Granada, one

hundred and fifty loaves, four sheep, and six pullets. But the holy man gave a still more illustrious proof of his charity when the hospital was on fire; for he carried out most of the sick on his own back: and though he passed and repassed through the flames, and staid in the midst of them a considerable time, he received no hurt. But his charity was not confined to his own hospital: he looked upon it as his own misfortune if the necessities of any distressed person in the whole country had remained unrelieved. He therefore made strict inquiry into the wants of the poor over the whole province, relieved many in their own houses, employed in a proper manner those that were able to work, and with wonderful sagacity laid himself out every way to comfort and assist all the afflicted members of Christ. He was particularly active and vigilant in settling and providing for young maidens in distress, to prevent the danger to which they are often exposed, of taking bad courses. He also reclaimed many who were already engaged in vice: for which purpose he sought out public sinners, and holding a crucifix in his hand, with many tears exhorted them to repentance. Though his life seemed to be taken up in continual action, he accompanied it with perpetual prayer and incredible corporal austerities. And his tears of devotion, his frequent raptures, and his eminent spirit of contemplation, gave a lustre to his other virtues. But his sincere humility appeared most admirable in all his actions, even amidst the honours which he received at the court of Valladolid, whither business called him. The king and princes seemed to vie with each other who should shew him the greatest courtesy, or put the largest alms in his hands; whose charitable contributions he employed with great prudence in Valladolid itself, and the adjacent country. Only perfect virtue could stand the test of honours, amidst which he appeared the most humble. Humiliations seemed to be his delight: these he courted and sought, and always underwent them with great alacrity. One day, when a woman called him hypocrite, and loaded him with invectives, he gave her privately a piece of money, and desired her to repeat all she had said in the market-place.

Worn out at last by ten years hard service in his hospital,

he fell sick. The immediate occasion of his distemper seemed to be excess of fatigue in saving wood and other such things for the poor in a great flood, in which, seeing a person in danger of being drowned, he swam in his long clothes to endeavour to rescue him, not without imminent hazard of his own life: but he could not see his christian brother perish without endeavouring at all hazards to succour him. He at first concealed his sickness, that he might not be obliged to diminish his labours and extraordinary austerities; but in the mean time he carefully revised the inventories of all things belonging to his hospital, and inspected all the accounts. He also reviewed all the excellent regulations which he had made for its administration, the distribution of time, and the exercises of piety to be observed in it. Upon a complaint that he harboured idle strollers and bad women, the archbishop sent for him, and laid open the charge against him. The man of God threw himself prostrate at his feet, and said: "The Son of God came for sinners, and we are obliged to "promote their conversion, to exhort them, and to sigh and "pray for them. I am unfaithful to my vocation because "I neglect this; and I confess that I know no other bad "person in my hospital but myself; who, as I am obliged "to own with extreme confusion, am a most base sinner, "altogether unworthy to eat the bread of the poor." This he spoke with so much feeling and humility that all present were much moved, and the archbishop dismissed him with respect, leaving all things to his discretion. His illness increasing, the news of it was spread abroad. The lady Anne Ossorio was no sooner informed of his condition, but she came in her coach to the hospital to see him. The servant of God lay in his habit in his little cell, covered with a piece of an old coat instead of a blanket, and having under his head, not indeed a stone, as was his custom, but a basket, in which he used to beg alms in the city for his hospital. The poor and sick stood weeping round him. The lady moved with compassion despatched secretly a message to the archbishop, who sent immediately an order to St. John to obey her as he would do himself, during his illness. By virtue of this authority she obliged him to leave his hospital. He

named Anthony Martin superior in his place, and gave moving instructions to his brethren, recommending to them, in particular, obedience and charity. In going out he visited the Blessed Sacrament, and poured forth his heart before it with extraordinary fervour; remaining there absorpt in his devotions so long, that the lady Anne Ossorio caused him to be taken up and carried into her coach, in which she conveyed him to her own house. She herself prepared with the help of her maids, and gave him with her own hands, his broths and other things, and often read to him the history of the passion of our Divine Redeemer. He complained that whilst our Saviour in his agony drank gall, they gave him, a miserable sinner, broths. The whole city was in tears; all the nobility visited him; the magistrates came to beg he would give his benediction to their city. He answered, that his sins rendered him the scandal and reproach of their country; but recommended to them his brethren the poor, and his religious that served them. At last, by order of the archbishop, he gave the city his dying benediction. His exhortations to all were most pathetic. His prayer consisted of most humble sentiments of compunction, and inflamed aspirations of divine love. The archbishop said mass in his chamber, heard his confession, gave him the Viaticum and Extreme-unction, and promised to pay all his debts, and to provide for all his poor. The saint expired on his knees, before the altar, on the eighth of March, in 1550, being exactly fifty-five years old. He was buried by the archbishop at the head of all the clergy, both secular and regular, accompanied by all the court, noblesse, and city, with the utmost pomp. He was honoured by many miracles, beatified by Urban VIII. in 1630, and canonized by Alexander VIII. in 1690. His relicks were translated into the church of his brethren in 1664. His Order of Charity to serve the sick was approved of by Pope Pius V. The Spaniards have their own general: but the religious in France and Italy obey a general who resides at Rome. They follow the rule of St. Austin.

One Sermon perfectly converted one who had been long

enslaved to the world and his passions, and made him a saint. How comes it that so many sermons and pious books produce so little fruit in our souls? It is altogether owing to our sloth and wilful hardness of heart, that we receive God's omnipotent word in vain, and to our most grievous condemnation. The heavenly seed can take no root in hearts which receive it with indifference and insensibility, or it is trodden upon and destroyed by the dissipation and tumult of our disorderly affections, or it is choked by the briers and thorns of earthly concerns. To profit by it, we must listen to it with awe and respect, in the silence of all creatures, in interior solitude and peace, and must carefully nourish it in our hearts. The holy law of God is comprised in the precept of divine love: a precept so sweet, a virtue so glorious and so happy, as to carry along with it its present incomparable reward. St. John, from the moment of his conversion, by the penitential austerities which he performed, was his own greatest persecutor; but it was chiefly by heroic works of charity that he endeavoured to offer to God the most acceptable sacrifice of compunction, gratitude, and love. What encouragement has Christ given us in every practice of this virtue, by declaring, that whatever we do to others he esteems as done to himself. To animate ourselves to fervour we may often call to mind what St. John frequently repeated to his disciples, "Labour "without intermission to do all the good works in your "power, whilst time is allowed you." His spirit of penance, love, and fervour he inflamed by meditating assiduously on the sufferings of Christ, of which he often used to say: "Lord, thy thorns are my roses, and thy sufferings my pa-"radise."

ST. FELIX, B. C.

He was a holy Burgundian priest, who converted and baptized Sigebert, prince of the East-Angles, during his exile in France, whither he was forced to retire, to secure himself from the insidious practices of his relations. Sigebert being called home to the crown of his ancestors, invited out of France his spiritual father St. Felix, to assist him in bringing

over his idolatrous subjects to the christian faith: these were the inhabitants of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire. Our saint being ordained bishop by Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, and deputed by him to preach to the East-Angles, was surprisingly successful in his undertaking, and made almost a thorough conversion of that country. The most learned and most christian king, Sigebert, as he is styled by Bede, concurred with him in all things, and founded churches, monasteries, and schools. From those words of Bede, that "He set up a school for youth, in which Felix furnished him "with masters," some have called him the founder of the university of Cambridge. St. Felix established schools at Felixstow; Cressy adds at Flixton or Felixton. King Sigebert, after two years, resigned his crown to Egric his cousin, and became a monk at Cnobersburgh, now Burgh-castle, in Suffolk, which monastery he had founded for St. Fursey. Four years after this, the people dragged him out of his retirement by main force, and conveyed him into the army, to defend them against the cruel king Penda, who had made war upon the East-Angles. He refused to bear arms, as inconsistent with the monastic profession; and would have nothing but a wand in his hand. Being slain with Egric in 642, he was honoured as a martyr in the English calendars, on the twenty-seventh of September, and in the Gallican on the seventh of August. Egric was succeeded by the good king Annas, the father of many saints; as, SS. Erconwald, bishop; Etheldrede, Sexburge, Ethelburge and Edilburge, abbesses; and Withburge. He was slain fighting against the Pagans, after a reign of nineteen years, and buried at Blitheburg: his remains were afterward removed to St. Edmond's-bury. St. Felix established his see at Dummoc, now Dunwich, in Suffolk, and governed it seventeen years, dying in 646. He was buried at Dunwich; but his relicks were translated to the abbey of Ramsey, under king Canutus. See Bede, l. 2. Malmesbury; Wharton, t. 1. p. 403.[a]

[a] Dunwich was formerly a large city, with fifty-two religious houses in it, but was gradually swallowed up by the sea. The remains of the steeples are still discoverable, under water, about five miles from the shore.—See Mr. Gardiner's History and Antiquities of Dunwich, 4to. in 1754.

SS. APOLLONIUS, PHILEMON, &c. MM.

Apollonius was a zealous holy anchoret, and was apprehended by the persecutors at Antinous in Egypt. Many heathens came to insult and affront him while in chains; and among others one Philemon, a musician, very famous, and much admired by the people. He treated the martyr as an impious person and a seducer, and one that deserved the public hatred. To his injuries the saint only answered, "My son, may God have mercy on thee, and not lay these "reproaches to thy charge." This his meekness wrought so powerfully on Philemon, that he forthwith confessed himself a Christian. Both were brought before the judge whom Metaphrastes and Usuard call Arian, and who had already put to death SS. Asclas, Timothy, Paphnutius, and several other martyrs: after making them suffer all manner of tortures, he condemned them to be burnt alive. When the fire was kindled about them, Apollonius prayed: Lord, deliver not to beasts the souls who confess thee; but manifest thy power. At that instant a cloud of dew encompassed the martyrs, and put out the fire. The judge and people cried out at this miracle: "The God of the Christians is the great "and only God." The prefect of Egypt being informed of it, caused the judge and the two confessors to be brought, loaded with irons, to Alexandria. During the journey, Apollonius, by his instructions, prevailed so far upon those who conducted him, that they presented themselves also to the judge with their prisoners, and confessed themselves likewise to be Christians. The prefect finding their constancy invincible, caused them all to be thrown into the sea, about the year 311. Their bodies were afterward found on the shore, and were all put into one sepulchre. "By whom," says Rufinus, "many miracles are wrought to the present time, and "the vows and prayers of all are received, and are accom-"plished. Hither the Lord was pleased to bring me, and "to fulfil my requests." See Rufinus Vit. Patr. l. 2. c. 19. p. 477. Palladius Lausiac. c. 65, 66.

ST. JULIAN, ARCHBISHOP OF TOLEDO, C.

He presided in the fourteenth and fifteenth councils of Toledo. King Wemba falling sick, received penance and the monastic habit from his hands, and recovering, lived afterward a monk. St. Julian has left us a history of the wars of king Wemba, a book against the Jews, and three books On Prognostics, or on death, and the state of souls after death. He teaches that love, and a desire of being united to God, ought to extinguish in us the natural fear of death: that the saints in heaven pray for us, earnestly desire our happiness, and know our actions either in God whom they behold, and in whom they discover all truth which it concerns them to know; or by the angels, the messengers of God on earth: but that the damned do not ordinarily know what passes on earth, because they neither see God, nor converse with our angels. He says that prayers for the dead are thanksgivings for the good, a propitiation for the souls in purgatory, but no relief to the damned. He was raised to the see of Toledo, in 680, and died in 690. See Ildefonse of Toledo, Append. Hom. Illustr.

ST. DUTHAK, BISHOP OF ROSS IN SCOTLAND, C.

His zeal and labours in preaching the word of God, his contempt of himself, his compassion for the poor and for sinners, his extreme love of poverty, never reserving any thing for himself, and the extraordinary austerity of his life, to which he had inured himself from his childhood, are much extolled by the author of his life. The same writer assures us, that he was famous for several miracles and predictions, and that he foretold an invasion of the Danes, which happened ten years after his death, in 1263, in the reign of Alexander III. when with their king Achol, they were defeated by Alexander Stuart, great grandfather to Robert, the first king of that family. This victory was ascribed to the intercession of St. Andrew and St. Duthac. Our saint, after longing desires of being united to God, passed joyfully to bliss,

in 1253. His relicks, kept in the collegiate church of Thane, in the county of Ross, were resorted to by pilgrims from all parts of Scotland. Lesley, the pious bishop of Ross, (who, after remaining four years in prison with queen Mary, passed into France, was chosen suffragan of Rouen, by cardinal Bourbon, and died at Brussels, in 1591) had an extraordinary devotion to this saint, the chief patron of his diocess. See Lesley, Descript. Scot. p. 27. and the MS. life of St. Duthak, compiled by a Scotish Jesuit, nephew by the mother to bishop Lesley, and native of that diocess. See also King in Calend.

ST. ROSA, OF VITERBO, VIRGIN.

From her childhood she addicted herself entirely to the practice of mortification and assiduous prayer; she was favoured with the gift of miracles, and an extraordinary talent of converting the most hardened sinners. She professed the third rule of St. Francis, living always in the house of her father in Viterbo, where she died in 1261. See Wading's Annals, and Barbaza Vies des SS. du Tiers Ordre. t. 2. p. 77.

ST. SENAN, B. C.

He was born in the country of Hy-Conalls in Ireland, in the latter part of the fifth century, was a disciple of the abbots Cassidus and Natal, or Naal: then travelled for spiritual improvement to Rome, and thence into Britain. In this kingdom he contracted a close friendship with St. David. After his return he founded many churches in Ireland, and a great monastery in Inis-Cathaig, an island lying at the mouth of the river Shannon, which he governed, and in which he continued to reside after he was advanced to the episcopal dignity. The abbots, his successors for several centuries, were all bishops, till this great diocess was divided into three, namely of Limerick, Killaloe, and Ardfert. St. Senan died on the same day and year with St. David; but was honoured in the Irish church on the eighth of March. A town in

Cornwall bears the name of St. Senan. See his acts in Colgan, p. 602.

ST. PSALMOD, OR SAUMAY, ANCHORET.

He was born in Ireland, and, retiring into France, led an eremitical life at Limousin, where he acquired great reputation for his sanctity and miracles. He died about 589. See the martyrology of Evreux.

MARCH IX.

ST. FRANCES, WIDOW,

FOUNDRESS OF THE COLLATINES.

Abridged from her life by her confessor Canon. Mattiotti; and that by Magdalen Dell 'Anguillara, superioress of the Oblates, or Collatines. Helyot, Histoire des ordr. mon. t. 6. p. 208.

A. D. 1440.

St. Frances was born at Rome in 1384. Her parents, Paul de Buxo and Jacobella Rofredeschi, were both of illustrious families. She imbibed early sentiments of piety, and such was her love of purity from her tender age, that she would not suffer her own father to touch even her hands, unless covered. She had always an aversion to the amusements of children, and loved solitude and prayer. At eleven years of age she desired to enter a monastery, but, in obedience to her parents, was married to a rich young Roman nobleman, named Laurence Ponzani, in 1396. A grievous sickness shewed how disagreeable this kind of life was to her inclinations. She joined with it her former spirit; kept herself as retired as she could, shunning feastings and public meet-

ings. All her delight was in prayer, meditation, and visiting churches. Above all, her obedience and condescension to her husband was inimitable, which engaged such a return of affection, that for forty years which they lived together, there never happened the least disagreement; and their whole life was a constant strife and emulation to prevent each other in mutual complaisance and respect. Whilst she was at her prayers or other exercises, if called away by her husband, or the meanest person of her family, she laid all aside to obey without delay, saying: "A married woman "must, when called upon, quit her devotions to God at the "altar, to find him in her household affairs." God was pleased to shew her the merit of this her obedience; for the authors of her life relate, that being called away four times in beginning the same verse of a psalm in our Lady's office, returning the fifth time, she found that verse written in golden letters. She treated her domestics not as servants, but as brothers and sisters, and future co-heirs in heaven; and studied by all means in her power to induce them seriously to labour for their salvation. Her mortifications were extraordinary, especially when some years before her husband's death, she was permitted by him to inflict on her body what hardships she pleased. She from that time abstained from wine, fish, and dainty meats, with a total abstinence from flesh, unless in her greatest sicknesses. Her ordinary diet was hard and mouldy bread. She would procure secretly, out of the pouches of the beggars, their dry crusts in exchange for better bread. When she fared the best, she only added to bread a few unsavoury herbs without oil, and drank nothing but water, making use of a human skull for her cup. She eat but once a day, and by long abstinence had lost all relish of what she took. Her garments were of coarse serge, and she never wore linen, not even in sickness. Her discipline was armed with rowels and sharp points. She wore continually a hair shirt, and a girdle of horse-hair. An iron girdle had so galled her flesh, that her confessor obliged her to lay it aside. If she inadvertently chanced to offend God in the least, she severely that instant punished the part that had offended; as the tongue, by sharply

biting it, &c. Her example was of such edification, that many Roman ladies having renounced a life of idleness, pomp and softness, joined her in pious exercises, and put themselves under the direction of the Benedictin monks of the congregation of Monte-Oliveto, without leaving the world, making vows, or wearing any particular habit. St. Frances prayed only for children that they might be citizens of heaven, and when she was blessed with them, it was her whole care to make them saints.

It pleased God, for her sanctification, to make trial of her virtue by many afflictions. During the troubles which ensued upon the invasion of Rome by Ladislas, king of Naples, and the great schism under pope John XXIII. at the time of opening the council of Constance, in 1413, her husband, with his brother-in-law Paulucci, was banished Rome, his estate confiscated, his house pulled down, and his eldest son, John Baptist, detained an hostage. Her soul remained calm amidst all those storms: she said with Job: "*God hath given,* "*and God hath taken away.* I rejoice in these losses, because "they are God's will. Whatever he sends I shall continually "bless and praise his name for." The schism being extinguished by the council of Constance, and tranquillity restored at Rome, her husband recovered his dignity and estate. Some time after, moved by the great favours St. Frances received from heaven, and by her eminent virtue, he gave her full leave to live as she pleased; and he himself chose to serve God in a state of continency. He permitted her in his own life-time to found a monastery of nuns, called Oblates, for the reception of such of her own sex as were disposed to embrace a religious life. The foundation of this house was in 1425. She gave them the rule of St. Benedict, adding some particular constitutions of her own, and put them under the direction of the congregation of the Olivetans. The house being too small for the numbers that fled to this sanctuary from the corruption of the world, she would gladly have removed her community to a larger house; but not finding one suitable, she enlarged it, in 1433, from which year the founding of the Order is dated. It was approved by pope Eugenius IV. in 1437. They are called Collatines,

perhaps from the quarter of Rome in which they are situated; and Oblates, because they call their profession an oblation, and use in it the word offero, not profiteor. St. Frances could not yet join her new family; but as soon as she had settled her domestic affairs, after the death of her husband, she went barefoot, with a cord about her neck, to the monastery which she had founded, and there, prostrate on the ground, before the religious, her spiritual children, begged to be admitted. She accordingly took the habit on St. Benedict's day, in 1437. She always sought the meanest employments in the house, being fully persuaded she was of all the most contemptible before God; and she laboured to appear as mean in the eyes of the world as she was in her own. She continued the same humiliations, and the same universal poverty, though soon after chosen superioress of her congregation. Almighty God bestowed on her humility, extraordinary graces, and supernatural favours, as frequent visions, raptures, and the gift of prophecy. She enjoyed the familiar conversation of her angel-guardian, as her life and the process of her canonization attest. She was extremely affected by meditating on our Saviour's passion, which she had always present to her mind. At mass she was so absorpt in God as to seem immovable, especially after holy communion: she often fell into ecstasies of love and devotion. She was particularly devout to Saint John the Evangelist, and above all to our Lady, under whose singular protection she put her Order. Going out to see her son John Baptist, who was dangerously sick, she fell so ill herself that she could not return to her monastery at night. After having foretold her death, and received the sacraments, she expired on the ninth of March, in the year 1440, and of her age the fifty-sixth. God attested her sanctity by miracles: she was honoured among the saints immediately after her death, and solemnly canonized by Paul V. in 1608. Her shrine in Rome is most magnificent and rich: and her festival is kept as a holy-day in the city, with great solemnity. The Oblates make no solemn vows, only a promise of obedience to the mother-president, enjoy pensions, inherit estates, and go abroad with leave. Their abbey in Rome is filled with ladies of the first rank.

In a religious life, in which a regular distribution of holy employments and duties take up the whole day, and leave no interstices of time for idleness, sloth, or the world, hours pass in these exercises with the rapidity of moments, and moments by fervour of the desires bear the value of years. There is not an instant in which a soul is not employed for God, and studies not with her whole heart to please him. Every step, every thought and desire, is a sacrifice of fidelity, obedience, and love offered to him. Even meals, recreation and rest, are sanctified by this intention; and from the religious vows and habitual purpose of the soul of consecrating herself entirely to God in time and eternity, every action, as St. Thomas teaches, renews and contains the fervour and merit of this entire consecration, of which it is a part. In a secular life, a person by regularity in the employment of his time, and fervour in devoting himself to God in all his actions and designs, may in some degree enjoy the same happiness and advantage. This St. Frances perfectly practised, even before she renounced the world. She lived forty years with her husband without ever giving him the least occasion of offence; and by the fervour with which she conversed in heaven, she seemed already to have quitted the earth, and to have made paradise her ordinary dwelling.

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA, B. C.

He was younger brother to St. Basil the Great; was educated in polite and sacred studies, and married to a virtuous lady. He afterward renounced the world, and was ordained lector; but was overcome by his violent passion for eloquence to teach rhetoric. St. Gregory Nazianzen wrote to him in the strongest terms, exhorting him to renounce that paltry or ignoble glory, as he elegantly calls it.[1] This letter produced its desired effect. St. Gregory returned to the sacred ministry in the lower functions of the altar: after some time he was called by his brother Basil to assist him in his pastoral duties, and in 372 was chosen bishop of Nyssa, a city of

[1] ἀδόξην εὐδοξίαν, Naz. ep. 43.

Cappadocia, near the Lesser Armenia. The Arians, who trembled at his name, prevailed with Demosthenes, vicar or deputy-governor of the province, to banish him. Upon the death of the Arian emperor, Valens, in 378, St. Gregory was restored to his see by the emperor Gratian. Our holy prelate was chosen by his colleagues to redress the abuses and dissentions which heresy had introduced in Arabia and Palestine. He assisted at the council of Constantinople, in 381, and was always regarded as the centre of the catholic communion in the East. Those prelates only who joined themselves to him, were looked upon as orthodox. He died about the year 400, probably on the tenth of January, on which the Greeks have always kept his festival: the Latins honour his memory on the ninth of March. The high reputation of his learning and virtue procured him the title of Father of the Fathers, as the seventh general council testifies. His sermons are the monuments of his piety; but his great penetration and learning appear more in his polemic works, especially in his twelve books against Eunomius. See his life collected from his works, St. Greg Nazianzen, Socrates, and Theodoret, by Hermant, Tillemont, t. 9. p. 561. Ceillier, t. 8. p. 200. Dr. Cave imagines, that St. Gregory continued to cohabit with his wife after he was bishop. But St. Jerom testifies that the custom of the eastern churches did not suffer such a thing. She seems to have lived to see him bishop, and to have died about the year 384; but she professed a state of continency: hence St. Gregory Nazianzen, in his short eulogium of her says, she rivalled her brothers-in-law who were in the priesthood, and calls her sacred, or one consecrated to God; probably she was a deaconess.

Appendix on the Writings of St. Gregory of Nyssa.

St. Gregory of Nyssa wrote many learned works extant in three volumes in folio, published by the learned Jesuit, Fronto le Duc, at Paris, An. 1615, and 1638. They are eternal monuments of this father's great zeal, piety, and eloquence. Photius commends his diction, as surpassing that of all other rhetoricians, in perspicuity, elegance, and a pleasing turn of expression, and says, that in the beauty and sweetness of his eloquence, and the copiousness of his arguments in his polemic works against Eunomius, he far outwent the rest who handled the same subjects. He wrote many commentaries on holy scripture. The first is his Hexæmeron, or book on the six days' work of the creation of the world. It is a supplement to his brother Basil's work on the same subject, who had omitted the obscurer questions, above the reach of the vulgar to whom he preached. Gregory filled up that deficiency, at the request of many learned men, with an accuracy that became the brother of the great Basil. He shews in this work a great knowledge of philosophy. He finishes it by saying, The widow that offered her two mites did not hinder the magnificent presents of the rich, nor did they who offered skins, wood, and goats' hair towards the tabernacle, hinder those who could give gold, silver, and precious stones. "I shall be happy," says he, "if I can present hairs; and shall rejoice to see others add ornaments of "purple, or gold tissue." His book On the Workmanship of Man, may be looked upon as a continuation of the former, though it was wrote first. He shews it was suitable that man, being made to command in quality of king all this lower creation, should find his palace already adorned, and that other things should be created before he appeared who was to be the spectator of the miracles of the Omnipotent. His frame is so admirable, his nature so excellent, that the whole Blessed Trinity proceeds as it were by a council, to his formation. He is a king by his superiority and command over all other creatures by his gift of reason; is part spiritual, by which he can unite himself to God; part material, by which he has it in his power to use and even enslave himself to creatures. Virtue is his purple garment, immortality his sceptre, and eternal glory his crown. His resemblance to his Creator consists in the soul only, that is, in its moral virtues and God's grace; which divine resemblance men most basely efface in themselves by sin. He speaks of the dignity and spiritual nature of the soul, and the future resurrection of the body, and concludes with an anatomical description of it, which shews him to have been well skilled in medicine, and in that branch of natural philosophy, for that age. The two homilies on the words, *Let us make man*, are falsely ascribed to him. Being desired by one Cæsarius to prescribe him rules of a perfect virtue, he did this by his Life of Moses, the pattern of virtue. He closes it with this lesson, that perfection consists not in avoiding sin for fear of torments, as slaves do, nor for the hope of recompense, as mercenaries do; but in "fearing, as the only thing to be "dreaded, to lose the friendship of God; "and in having only one desire, viz. of "God's friendship, in which alone man's "spiritual life consists. This is to be "obtained by fixing the mind only on "divine and heavenly things." We have next his two treatises On the Inscriptions of the Psalms, and An Exposition of the sixth Psalm, full of allegorical and moral instructions. In the first of these, extolling the divine sentiments and instructions of those holy prayers, he says, that all Christians learned them, and thought that time lost in which they had them not in their mouths: even little children and old men sung them; all in affliction found them their comfort sent by God:

those who travelled by land or sea, those who were employed in sedentary trades; and the faithful of all ages, sexes, and conditions, sick and well, made the Psalms their occupation. These divine canticles were sung by them in all times of joy, in marriages and festivals; by day, and in the night vigils, &c. His eight homilies On the three first Chapters of Ecclesiastes, are an excellent moral instruction and literal explication of that book. He addressed his fifteen homilies On the Book of Canticles, which he had preached to his flock, to Olympias, a lady of Constantinople, who, after twenty months marriage, being left a widow, distributed a great estate to the church and poor, a great part by the hands of our saint, whom she had settled an acquaintance with in a journey he had made to the imperial city. St. Gregory extols the excellency of that divine book, not to be read but by pure hearts, disengaged from all love of creatures, and free from all corporeal images. He says the Holy Ghost instructs us by degrees; by the book of Proverbs to avoid sin; by Ecclesiastes to draw our affections from creatures; by this of Canticles he teaches perfection, which is pure charity. He explains it mystically. He has five orations On the Lord's Prayer. In the first, he elegantly shews the universal, indispensable necessity of prayer, which alone unites the heart to God, and preserves it from the approach of sin. Every breath we draw ought also to be accompanied with thanksgiving, as it brings us innumerable benefits from God, which we ought continually to acknowledge. But we must only pray for spiritual, not temporal things. In the second, he shews that none can justly call God father, who remain in sin, without desires of repentance, and who consequently bear the ensigns of the devil. Resemblance with God is the mark of being his son; that title farther obliges us to have our minds and hearts always in heaven. By the next we pray that God alone may reign in us, and his will be ever done by us; and that the devil or self-love never have any share in our hearts or actions. By the fourth we ask bread, *i. e.* absolute necessaries, not dainties, not riches, or any thing superfluous, or for the world, and even bread only for to-day, without solicitude for to-morrow, which perhaps will never come: all irregular desires and all occasions of them must be excluded. "The serpent is watching at your heel, "but do you watch his head: give him "no admittance into your mind: from "the least entrance he will draw in after "him the foldings of his whole body. If "Eve's counsellor persuades you that "any thing looks beautiful and tastes "sweet, if you listen you are soon drawn "into gluttony, and lust, and avarice, "&c." The fifth petition he thus paraphrases, "I have forgiven my debtors, do "not reject your suppliant. I dismissed "my debtor cheerful and free: I am "your debtor, send me not away sorrowful. May my dispositions, my sentence "prevail with you. I have pardoned, "pardon: I have shewed compassion; "imitate your servant's mercy. My offences are indeed far more grievous; "but consider how much you excel in "all good. It is just that you manifest "to sinners a mercy suiting your infinite "greatness. I have given proof of mercy "in little things according to the capacity of my nature; but your bounty is "not to be confined by the narrowness "of my power, &c." His eight sermons On the eight Beatitudes are wrote in the same style. What he says in them on the motives of humility, which he thinks is meant by the first beatitude, of poverty of spirit, and on meekness, proves how much his heart was filled with those divine virtues.

Besides what we have of St. Gregory on the holy scripture, time has preserved us many other works of piety of this father. His discourse entitled On his Ordination, ought to be called On the Dedication. It was spoke by him in the consecration of a magnificent church, built by Rufin (præfect of the prætorium) ann. 394, at the borough of the Oak, near Chalcedon. His sermon, On loving the Poor, is a pathetic exhortation to alms, from the last sentence on the wicked for a neglect of that duty. "At which threat," he says, "I am most vehemently terrified, and disturbed in mind." He excites to compassion for the lepers in particular, who under their miseries are our brethren, and it is only God's favour that

has preserved us sound rather than them; and who knows what we ourselves may become? His dialogue Against Fate was a disputation with a Heathen philosopher, who maintained a destiny or overruling fate in all things. His canonical epistle to Letoius, bishop of Melitine, metropolis of Armenia, has a place among the canons of penance in the Greek church, published by Beveridge. He condemns apostacy to perpetual penance, deprived of the sacraments till the article of death: if only extorted by torments, for nine years; the same law for witchcraft; nine years for simple fornication; eighteen for adultery; twenty-seven for murder, or for rapine. But he permits the terms to be abridged in cases of extraordinary fervour. Simple theft he orders to be expiated by the sinner giving all his substance to the poor; if he has none, to work to relieve them.

His discourse against those who defer baptism, is an invitation to sinners to penance, and chiefly of catechumens to baptism, death being always uncertain. He is surprised to see an earthquake or pestilence drive all to penance and to the font: though an apoplexy or other sudden death may as easily surprise men any night of their lives. He relates this frightful example. When the Nomades Scythians plundered those parts, Archias, a young nobleman of Comanes, whom he knew very well, and who deferred his baptism, fell into their hands, and was shot to death by their arrows, crying out lamentably, "Mountains and woods, "baptize me; trees and rocks, give me "the grace of the sacrament." Which miserable death more afflicted the city than all the rest of the war. His sermons Against Fornication, On Penance, On Alms, and On Pentecost, are in the same style. In that against Usurers, he exerts a more than ordinary zeal, and tells them: "Love the poor. In his necessity "he has recourse to you, to assist his mi-"sery, but by lending him on usury you "increase it: you sow new miseries on "his sorrows, and add to his afflictions. "In appearance you do him a pleasure, "but in reality ruin him, like one who, "overcome by a sick man's importu-"nities, gives him wine, a present sa-"tisfaction, but a real poison. Usury "gives no relief, but makes your neigh-"bour's want greater than it was. The "usurer is no way profitable to the re-"public, neither by tilling the ground, "by trade, &c.; yet idle at home, would "have all to produce to him; hates all "he gains not by. But though you were "to give alms of these unjust exactions, "they would carry along with them the "tears of others robbed by them. The "beggar that receives, did he know it, "would refuse to be fed with the flesh "and blood of a brother; with bread "extorted by rapine, from other poor. "Give it back to him from whom you "unjustly took it.—But to hide their "malice, they change the name usury "into milder words, calling it interest or "moderate profit, like the Heathens, who "called their furies by the soft name "Eumenides." He relates that a rich usurer of Nyssa, so covetous as to deny himself and children necessaries, and not to use the bath to save three farthings, dying suddenly, left his money all hid and buried where his children could never find it, who by that means were all reduced to beggary. "The usurers an-"swer me," says he, "then we will not "lend; and what will the poor do? I "bid them give, and exhort to lend, but "without interest; for he that refuses "to lend, and he that lends at usury, are "equally criminal;" viz. if the necessity of another be extreme. His sermon On the Lent Fast displays the advantage of fasting for the health of both body and soul; he demands these forty days strenuous labour to cure all their vices, and insists on total abstinence from wine at large, and that weakness of constitution and health is ordinarily a vain pretence. Saint Gregory's great Catechistical Discourse is commended by Theodoret, (dial. 2 & 3.) Leontius, (b. 3.) Euthymius, (Panopl. p. 215.) Germanus patr. of Constantinople (in Photius cod. 233, &c.) The last lines are an addition. In the fortieth chapter he expounds to the catechumens the mysteries of the Unity and Trinity of God, and the Incarnation: also the two sacraments of baptism and the body of Christ, in which latter Christ's real body is mixed with our corruptible bodies, to bestow on us immortality and grace.

In his book Upon Virginity he extols its merit and dignity.

St. Gregory was much scandalized in his journey to Jerusalem to see contentions reign in that holy place; yet he had the comfort to find there several persons of great virtue, especially three very devout ladies, to whom he afterward wrote a letter, in which he says (t. 3. p. 655, 656.) "When I saw those holy places, I "was filled with a joy and pleasure which "no tongue can express." Soon after his return, he wrote a short treatise on those who go to Jerusalem, (t. 3. app. p. 72.) in which he condemns pilgrimages, when made an occasion of sloth, dissipation of mind, and other dangers; and observes that they are no part of the gospel precepts. Dr. Cave (p. 44.) borrows the sophistry of Du Moulin to employ this piece against the practice of pilgrimages; but in part very unjustly, as Gretser (not. in Notas Molinei) demonstrates. Some set too great a value on pilgrimages, and made them an essential part of perfection: and by them even many monks and nuns exchanged their solitude into a vagabond life. These abuses St. Gregory justly reproves. What he says, that he himself received no good by visiting the holy places, must be understood to be a Miosis, or extenuation to check the monks' too ardent passion for pilgrimages, and only means, the presence of those holy places, barely of itself, contributes nothing to a man's sanctification: but he does not deny it to be profitable by many devout persons uniting together in prayer and mortification, and by exciting hearts more powerfully to devotion. "Movemur locis "ipsis in quibus eorum quos admiramur "aut diligimus adsunt vestigia," said Atticus in Cicero. "Me quidem illæ ipsæ "nostræ Athenæ, non tam operibus mag-"nificis exquisitisque antiquorum artibus "delectant, quam recordatione summo-"rum virorum, ubi quis habitare, ubi se-"dere, ubi disputare sit solitus, studio-"seque eorum sepulchra contemplor." Much more must the sight of the places of Christ's mysteries stir up our sentiments and love. Why else did St. Gregory go over Calvary, Golgotha, Olivet, Bethleem? What was the unspeakable (spiritual certainly, not corporal) pleasure he was filled with at their sight? a real spiritual benefit, and that which is sought by true pilgrims. Does he not relate and approve the pilgrimages of his friend, the monk Olympius? Nor could he be ignorant of the doctrine and practice of the church. He must know in the third century that his countryman Alexander, a bishop in Cappadocia, admonished by divine oracle, went to Jerusalem to pray, and to visit the holy places, &c. as Eusebius relates; (Hist. lib. 6. cap. 11. p. 212.) and that this had been always the tradition and practice. "Lon-"gum est nunc ab ascensu Domini usque "ad præsentem diem per singulas ætates "currere, qui episcoporum, qui marty-"rum, qui eloquentium in doctrina ec-"clesiastica virorum venerint Hierosoly-"mam, putantes se minus religionis, "minus habere scientiæ, nec summam ut "dicitur manum accepisse virtutum, nisi "in illis Christum adorassent locis de "quibus primum Evangelium de pari "bulo coruscaverat." St. Jerom, in ep. Paulæ et Eustochii ad Marcellam (T. 4. p. 550. ed Ben.) As for the abuses which St. Gregory censures, they are condemned in the canon law, by all divines and men of sound judgment. If with Benedict XIV. we grant this father reprehended the abuses of pilgrimages, so as to think the devotion itself not much to be recommended, this can only regard the circumstances of many who abuse them, which all condemn. He could not oppose the torrent of other fathers, and the practice of the whole church. And his devotion to holy places, relicks, &c. is evident in his writings and in the practice of Saint Macrina and his whole family.

His discourse On the Resurrection is the dialogue he had with his sister Saint Macrina the day before her death. His treatise On the Name and Profession of a Christian, was wrote to shew no one ought to bear that name, who does not practise the rules of this profession, and who has not its spirit, without which, a man may perform exterior duties, but will upon occasions betray himself, and forget his obligation. When a mountebank at Alexandria had taught an ape dressed in woman's clothes to dance most ingeniously, the people took it for a woman, till one threw some almonds on the stage; for then the beast could no longer

contain, but tearing off its clothes, went about the stage picking up its dainty fruit, and shewed itself to be an ape. Occasions of vain-glory, ambition, pleasure, &c. are the devil's baits, and prove who are Christians, and who hypocrites and dissemblers under so great a name, whose lives are an injury and blasphemy against Christ and his holy religion. His book On Perfection teaches, that that life is most perfect which resembles nearest the life of Christ in humility and charity, and in dying to all passions and to the love of creatures: that in which Christ most perfectly lives, and which is his best living image, which appears in a man's thoughts, words, and actions; for these shew the image which is imprinted on the soul. But there is no perfection which is not occupied in continually advancing higher.

His book On the Resolution of Perfection to the monks, shews perfection to consist in every action being referred to God, and done perfectly conformable to his will in the spirit of Christ. St. Gregory had excommunicated certain persons, who instead of repenting, fell to threats and violence. The saint made against them his sermon, entitled, Against those who do not receive chastisement submissively; in which, after exhorting them to submission, he offers himself to suffer torments and death, closing it thus; "How can we murmur to suffer, who "are the ministers of a God crucified? "yet under all you inflict, I receive your "insolences and persecutions as a father "and mother do from their dearest chil- "dren, with tenderness." In the discourse On Children dying without Baptism, he shews that such can never enjoy God; yet feel not the severe torments of the rest of the damned. We have his sermons On Pentecost, Christ's Birth, Baptism, Ascension, and On his Resurrection, (but of these last only the first, third, and fourth are St. Gregory's) and two On St. Stephen, three On the forty Martyr's: the lives of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, St. Theodorus, St. Ephrem, St. Meletius, and his own sister, St. Macrina: his panegyric on his brother Saint Basil the Great, the funeral oration of Pulcheria, daughter to the Emperor Theodosius, six years old, and that of his mother, the empress Flaccilla, who died soon after her at the waters in Thrace. St. Gregory was invited to make these two discourses, in 385, when he was at Constantinople. We have only five of St. Gregory's letters in his works. Zacagnius has published fourteen others out of the Vatican library. Caraccioli of Pisa, in 1731, has given us seven more with tedious notes.

St. Gregory surpasses himself in perspicuity and strength of reasoning, in his polemic works against all the chief heretics of his time. His twelve books against Eunomius, were ever most justly valued above the rest. St. Basil had refuted that heresiarch's apology; nor durst he publish any answer, till after the death of that eloquent champion of the faith. Then the Apology of his Apology began to creep privately abroad. St. Gregory got at last a copy, and wrote his twelve excellent books, in which he vindicates St. Basil's memory, and gives many secret histories of the base Eunomius's life. He proves against him the Divinity and Consubstantiality of God the Son. Though he employs the scripture with extraordinary sagacity, he says, tradition, by succession from the apostles, is alone sufficient to condemn heretics. (Or. 3. contra Eunom. p. 123.) We have his treatise To Ablavius, that there are not three Gods. A treatise On Faith also against the Arians. That On common Notions, is an explication of the terms used about the Blessed Trinity. We have his Ten Syllogisms against the Manichees, proving that evil cannot be a God. The heresy of the Apollinarists beginning to be broached, Saint Gregory wrote to Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, against them, shewing there is but one Person in Christ. But his great work against Apollinaris is his Antirretic, quoted by Leontius, the sixth general council, &c. Only a fragment was printed in the edition of this father's works; but it was published from MSS. by Zacagnius, prefect of the Vatican Library, in 1698. He shews in it that the Divinity could not suffer, and that there must be two natures in Christ, who was perfect God and perfect man. He proves also, against Apollinaris, that Christ had a human soul with a human understanding. His book of Testimonies against the Jews is another fruit of his zeal.

St. Gregory so clearly establishes the Procession of the holy Ghost from the Son, that some Greeks, obstinate in that heresy, erased out of his writings the words *out of*, as they confessed in a council at Constantinople, in 1280. He expressly condemned Nestorianism before it was broached, and says, "No one dare call "the holy Virgin and mother of God, "mother of man." (Ep. ad Eustath. p. 1093.) He asserts her virginity in and after the birth of Christ. (Or. contr. Eunom. p. 108. & Serm. in natale Christi, p. 776.) He is no less clear for transubstantiation in his great catechistical discourse (c. 37. p. 534, 535.) for the sacrifice and the altar. Or. in Bapt. Christi, p. 801. Private confession of sins is plain from his epistle to Letoius (p. 954.) in which he writes thus: "Whoever se- "cretly steals another man's goods, if he "afterward discovers his sin by declar- "ation to the priest, his heart being "changed, he will cure his wound, giving "what he has to the poor." This for occult theft, for which no canonical penance was prescribed. He inculcates the authority of priests of binding and loosing before God, (Serm. de castig. 746, 747.) and calls St. Peter "prince of the apostolic choir," (Serm. 2. de sancto Stephano edito a Zacagnio, p. 339.) and (ib. p. 343.) "the head of the apostles;" and adds, "In glorifying him all the members of "the church are glorified, and that it is "founded on him." He writes very expressly and at length on the invocation of saints, and says they enjoy the beatific vision immediately after death, in his sermons on St. Theodorus, on the Forty Martyrs, St. Ephrem, St. Meletius, &c.

ST. PACIAN, BISHOP OF BARCELONA, C.

Was a great ornament of the church in the fourth century. He was illustrious by birth, and had been engaged in marriage in the world. His son Dexter was raised to the first dignities in the empire, being high chamberlain to the emperor Theodosius, and præfectus-prætorio under Honorius. St. Pacian having renounced the world, was made bishop in 373. St. Jerom, who dedicated to him his Catalogue of illustrious men, extols his eloquence and learning, and more particularly the chastity and sanctity of his life. We have his Exhortation to Penance, and three letters to Sympronianus, a Novatian nobleman, on Penance, and on the name of Catholic; also a sermon on Baptism. See St. Jerom, Catal. Vir. Illust. c. 106. p. 195. t. 4. Ceillier, t. 6. Tillem. t. 8.

Appendix on the Writings of St. Pacian of Barcelona.

When he was made bishop of Barcelona, in 373, there lived in the neighbourhood of that city one Sympronian, a man of distinction, whom the bishop calls brother and lord, who was a Donatist, and also engaged in the heresy of the Novatians, who following the severity of the Montanists, denied penance and pardon for certain sins. He sent Saint Pacian a letter by a servant, in which he censured the church for allowing repentance to all crimes, and for taking the title of Catholic. St. Pacian answers him in three learned letters.

In the first he sums up the principal heresies from Simon Magus to the Novatians, and asks Sympronian, which he will choose to stand by: entreats him to examine the true church with docility and candour, laying aside all obstinacy, the enemy to truth. He says the name Catholic comes from God, and is necessary to distinguish the dove, the undivided virgin church from all sects, which are called from their particular founders. This name we learned from the holy doctors, confessors, and martyrs. "My "name," says he, "is Christian, my "surname Catholic: the one distin- "guishes me, the other points me out "to others." "Christianus mihi no- "men est; Catholicus vero cognomen: "illud me nuncupat, istud ostendit; hoc "probor, inde significor." He says that no name can be more proper to express the church, which is all obedient to Christ, and one and the same through the whole world. "As to penance," says he, "God "grant it be necessary to none of the "faithful; that none after baptism fall "into the pit of death—but accuse not "God's mercy, who has provided a re- "medy even for those that are sick. "Does the infernal serpent continually "carry poison, and has not Christ a "remedy? Does the devil kill, and can- "not Christ relieve? Fear sin, but not "repentance. Be ashamed to be in "danger, not to be delivered out of it. "Who will snatch a plank from one lost "by shipwreck? Who will envy the "healing of wounds?" He mentions the parables of the lost drachma, the lost sheep, the prodigal son, the Samaritan, and God's threats, adding: "God would "never threaten the impenitent, if he "refused pardon. But you'll say, only "God can do this. It is true; but what "he does by his priests, is his power. "What is that he says to his apostles? "Whatsoever you shall bind, &c. Mat. "16. Why this, if it was not given to "men to bind and to loosen? Is this "given only to the apostles? Then it is "only given to them to baptize, to give "the Holy Ghost (in confirmation) to "cleanse the sins of infidels, because all "this was commanded to no other than "to the apostles. If therefore the "power of baptism and of chrism, (con- "firmation) which are far greater gifts, "descended from the apostles to bishops; "the power of binding and loosing also "came to them." He concludes with these words: "I know, brother, this "pardon of repentance is not promiscu- "ously to be given to all, nor to be "granted before the signs of the divine "will, or perchance the last sickness; "with great severity and strict scrutiny, "after many groans, and shedding of "tears; after the prayers of the whole "church. But pardon is not denied to "true repentance, that no one prevent "or put by the judgment of Christ." St. Pacian answers his reply by a second letter, that remedies seem often bitter, and says, "How can you be offended at "my catalogue of heresies, unless you "was a heretic? I congratulate with "you for agreeing upon our name Ca- "tholic, which if you denied, the thing "itself would cry out against you." Saint Pacian denies that St. Cyprian's people were ever called Apostatics or Capitolins, or by any name but that of

Catholics, which the Novatians, with all their ambition for it, could never obtain, nor ever be known but by the name of Novatians. He says, the emperors persecuted the Novatians of their own authority, not at the instigation of the church. "You say I am angry," says he; "God forbid. I am like the bee "which sometimes defends its honey "with its sting." He vindicates the martyr St. Cyprian, and denies that Novatian ever suffered for the faith; adding, that "if he had, he could not have been "crowned, because he was out of the "church, out of which, no one can be a "martyr. Etsi occisus, non tamen co-"ronatus: quidni? Extra Ecclesiæ pa-"cem, extra concordiam, extra eam "matrem cujus portio debet esse, qui "martyr est. Si charitatem non habeam, "nihil sum. 1 Cor. xiii." In his third letter he confutes the Novatian error: that the church could not forgive mortal sin after baptism. "Moses, St. Paul, "Christ, express tender charity for sin-"ners; who then broached this doctrine? "Novatian. But when? Immediately "from Christ? No; almost three hun-"dred years after him: since Decius's "reign. Had he any prophets to learn "it from? any proof of his revelation? "had he the gift of tongues? did he pro-"phesy? could he raise the dead? for "he ought to have some of these to in-"troduce a new gospel. Nay, St. Paul "(Gal. 1.) forbids a novelty in faith to "be received from an angel. You will "say, Let us dispute our point. But I "am secure; content with the succes-"sion and tradition of the church, with "the communion of the ancient body. "I have sought no arguments." He assents that the church is holy, and more than Sympronian had given it: but says it cannot perish by receiving sinners. The good have always lived amidst the wicked. It is the heretic who divides it, and tears it, which is Christ's garment, asunder. The church is diffused over the whole world, and cannot be reduced to one little portion, or as it were chained to a part, as the Novatians, whose history he touches upon. Sympronian objected, that Catholic bishops remitted sin. St. Pacian answers, "Not I, but "only God, who both blots out sin in "baptism, and does not reject the tears "of penitents. What I do is not in my "own name, but in the Lord's. Where-"fore whether we baptize, or draw to "penance, or give pardon to penitents, "we do it by Christ's authority. You "must see whether Christ can do it, "and did it—Baptism is the sacrament "of our Lord's passion; the pardon of "penitents is the merit of confession. "All can obtain that, because it is the "gratuitous gift of God; but this la-"bour is but of a small number who "rise after a fall, and recover by tears, "and by destroying the flesh." The saint shews the Novatians encourage sin by throwing men into despair; whereas repentance heals and stops it. Christ does not die a second time indeed for the pardon of sinners, but he is a powerful Advocate interceding still to his Father for sinners. Can he forsake those he redeemed at so dear a rate? Can the devil enslave, and Christ not absolve his servants? He alleges St. Peter denying Christ after he had been baptized, Saint Thomas incredulous, even after the resurrection; yet pardoned by repentance. He answers his objections from scripture, and exhorts him to embrace the catholic faith; for the true church cannot be confined to a few, nor be new. "If she "began before you, if she believed before "you, if she never left her foundation, "and was never divorced from her body, "she must be the spouse; it is the great "and rich house of all. God did not "purchase with his blood so small a por-"tion, nor is Christ so poor. The church "of God dilates its tabernacles from the "rising to the setting of the sun."

Next to these three letters we have his excellent Parænesis, or exhortation to penance. In the first part he reduces the sins subjected to courses of severe public penance by the canons, to three, idolatry, murder, and impurity; and shews the enormity of each. In the second he addresses himself to those sinners, who out of shame, or for fear of the penances to be enjoined, did not confess their crimes. He calls them shamefully timorous and bashful to do good, after having been bold and impudent to sin, and says, "And you do not tremble to touch the "holy mysteries, and to thrust your

" defiled soul into the holy place, in the " sight of the angels, and before God " himself, as if you were innocent." He mentions Oza slain for touching the ark, (2 Kings vi.) and the words of the apostle, (1 Cor. xi.) adding, " Do not you " tremble when you hear, he shall be " guilty of the body and blood of the " Lord? One guilty of the blood of a " man would not rest, and can he escape " who has profaned the body of the Lord? " What do you do by deceiving the priest, " or hiding part of your load? I beseech " you no longer to cover your wounded " conscience. Rogo vos etiam pro periculo meo, per illum Dominum quem " occulta non fallunt, desinite vulneratam tegere conscientiam. Men sick " are not backward to shew their sores " to physicians; and shall the sinner be " afraid or ashamed to purchase eternal " life by a momentary confusion? Will " he draw back his wounds from the " Lord, who is offering his hand to heal " them? Peccator timebit? peccator " erubescet perpetuam vitam præsenti " pudore mercari? et offerenti manus " Domino vulnera male tecta subducet?" In his third part he speaks to those who confessed their sins entirely, but feared the severity of the penance. He compares these to dying men who should not have the courage to take a doze which would restore their health, and says, " This is to cry out, behold I am sick, " I am wounded; but I will not be cured." He deplores their delicacy, and proposes to them king David's austere penance. He describes thus the life of a penitent. " He is to weep in the sight " of the church, to go meanly clad, to " mourn, to fast, to prostrate himself, " to renounce the bath, and such de- " lights. If invited to a banquet he is to " say, such things are for those who have " not had the misfortune to have sinned; " I have offended the Lord, and am in " danger of perishing for ever: what " have I to do with feasts? Ista felicibus: " ego deliqui in Dominum, et periclitor " in æternum perire: quo mihi epulas " qui Dominum læsi? You must more- " over sue for the prayers of the poor, " of the widows, of the priests, prostrat- " ing yourself before them, and of the " whole church; to do every thing ra- " ther than to perish. Omnia prius " tentare ne pereas." He presses sinners to severe penance, for fear of hell, and paints a frightful image of it from the fires of Vesuvius and Ætna. His treatise or sermon On Baptism, is an instruction on original sin, and the effects of this sacrament, by which we are reborn, as by chrism or confirmation we receive the Holy Ghost by the hands of the bishop. He adds a moving exhortation that, being delivered from sin, and having renounced the devil, we no more return to sin; such a relapse after baptism being much worse. " Hold there- " fore, strenuously, says he, what you " have received, preserve it faithfully; " sin no more; keep yourselves pure " and spotless for the day of our Lord."

Besides these three books, he wrote one against the play of the stag, commended by St. Jerom, but now lost. The heathens had certain infamous diversions with a little stag at the beginning of every year, mentioned by St. Ambrose, (in Ps. 141.) and by Nilus, (ep. 81.) It seems from the sermons 129, 130, in the appendix to St. Augustine's, (t. 5.) that it consisted of masquerades, dressed in the figures of wild beasts. Some Christians probably joined in them. Saint Pacian's zeal dictated that book against it: but the effect it produced at that time, seemed chiefly to make many more curious and more eager to see that wicked play, at St. Pacian himself says in the beginning of his exhortation to penance. The beauty of this holy doctor's writings can only be discovered by reading them. His diction is elegant, his reasoning just and close, and his thoughts beautiful; he is full of unction when he exhorts to virtue, and of strength when he attacks vice.

SAINT CATHERINE OF BOLOGNA, VIRGIN,
ABBESS OF THE POOR CLARES IN THAT CITY.

She was born of noble parentage at Bologna, in 1413. Early ardent sentiments of piety seemed to have prevented in her the use of reason. At twelve years of age she was placed in quality of a young maid of honour in the family of the princess Margaret, daughter to Nicholas of Est, marquis of Ferrara. Two years after, upon the marriage of that princess, she found means to recover her liberty, and entered herself in a community of devout ladies of the Third Order of St. Francis, at Ferrara, who soon after formed themselves into a regular monastery, and adopted the austere rule of St. Clare. A new nunnery of Poor Clares being founded at Bologna, St. Catherine was chosen first prioress, and sent thither by Leonarda, abbess of the monastery of Corpus Christi, in which she had made her religious profession at Ferrara. Catherine's incredible zeal and solicitude for the souls of sinners made her pour forth prayers and tears, almost without intermission, for their salvation. She always spoke to God, or of God, and bore the most severe interior trials with an heroic patience and cheerfulness. She looked upon it as the greatest honour to be in any thing the servant of the spouses of Christ, and desired to be despised by all, and to serve all in the meanest employments. She was favoured with the gifts of miracles and prophecy: but said she had been sometimes deceived by the devil. She died on the ninth of March, 1463, in the fiftieth year of her age. Her body is still entire, and shewn in the church of her convent through bars and glass, sitting richly covered, but the hands, face, and feet naked. It was seen and described by Henschenius, Lassels, and other travellers. Her name was inserted in the Roman Martyrology by Clement VIII. in 1592. The solemnity of her canonization was performed by Clement XI. though the bull was only published by Benedict XIII. in 1724.[1] A book of her revelations was printed at Bologna

[1] Bullar. Roman. t. 13. p. 87.

in 1511. She also left notes in her prayer-book of certain singular favours which she had received from God. These revelations were published and received their dress from another hand, which circumstance is often as great a disadvantage in such works as if an illiterate and bold transcriber were to copy, from a single defective manuscript, Lycophron or some other obscure author, which he did not understand. St. Catherine wrote some treatises in Italian, others in Latin, in which language she was well skilled. The most famous of her works is the book entitled, On the seven Spiritual Arms. See her life in Bollandus, written by F. Paleotti, fifty years after her death.

MARCH X.

THE FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE.

From St. Basil's Homily on their festival, Hom. 20. t. 1. p. 453. and three discourses of St. Gregory of Nyssa, t. 2. p. 203. t. 3. p. 499. 504. followed by Saint Ephrem, ed. Vatic. Gr. and Lat. t. 2. p. 341. St. Gaudentius, St. Chrysostom, quoted by Photius. See Tillemont. t. 5. p. 518. Ruinart, p. 523. Ceillier, t. 4. p. 62. Jos. Assemani in Cal. Univ. ad 11. Martii, t. 6. p. 172.

A. D. 320.

THESE holy martyrs suffered at Sebaste, in the Lesser Armenia, under the emperor Licinius, in 320. They were of different countries, but enrolled in the same troop; all in the flower of their age, comely, brave, and robust, and were become considerable for their services. St. Gregory of Nyssa and Procopius say, they were of the thundering legion, so famous under Marcus Aurelius for the miraculous rain and victory obtained by their prayers. This was the twelfth legion, and then quartered in Armenia. Lysias was duke or general of the forces, and Agricola, the governor of the province. The latter having signified to the army the orders of

the emperor Licinius, for all to sacrifice, these forty went boldly up to him, and said they were Christians, and that no torments should make them ever abandon their holy religion. The judge first endeavoured to gain them by mild usage; as by representing to them the dishonour that would attend their refusal to do what was required, and by making them large promises of preferment and high favour with the emperor in case of compliance. Finding these methods of gentleness ineffectual, he had recourse to threats, and these the most terrifying, if they continued disobedient to the emperor's order; but all in vain. To his promises they answered, that he could give them nothing equal to what he would deprive them of: and to his threats, that his power only extended over their bodies, which they had learned to despise when their souls were at stake. The governor, finding them all resolute, caused them to be torn with whips, and their sides to be rent with iron hooks. After which they were loaded with chains, and committed to jail.

After some days, Lysias, their general, coming from Cæsarea to Sebaste, they were re-examined, and no less generously rejected the large promises made them than they despised the torments they were threatened with. The governor, highly offended at their courage, and that liberty of speech, with which they accosted him, devised an extraordinary kind of death; which being slow and severe, he hoped would shake their constancy. The cold in Armenia is very sharp, especially in March, and towards the end of Winter, when the wind is north, as it then was; it being also at that time a severe frost. Under the walls of the town stood a pond which was frozen so hard that it would bear walking upon with safety. The judge ordered the saints to be exposed quite naked on the ice.[a] And in order to tempt them the more powerfully to renounce their faith, a warm-bath was prepared at a small distance from the frozen pond, for any of this company to go to, who were disposed to purchase

[a] The acts and the greater part of the writers of their lives suppose they were to stand in the very water. But this is a circumstance which Tillemont, Baillet, Ruinart, Ceillier and others correct from St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nyssa.

their temporal ease and safety on that condition. The martyrs, on hearing their sentence, ran joyfully to the place, and without waiting to be stript, undressed themselves, encouraging one another in the same manner as is usual among soldiers in military expeditions attended with hardships and dangers, saying, that one bad night would purchase them an happy eternity.[b] They also made this their joint prayer: "Lord, "we are forty who are engaged in this combat; grant that "we may be forty crowned, and that not one be wanting to "this sacred number." The guards in the mean time ceased not to persuade them to sacrifice, that by so doing they might be allowed to pass to the warm bath. But though it is not easy to form a just idea of the bitter pain they must have undergone, of the whole number only one had the misfortune to be overcome: who losing courage went off from the pond to seek the relief in readiness for such as were disposed to renounce their faith: but as the devil usually deceives his adorers, the apostate no sooner entered the warm water but he expired. This misfortune afflicted the martyrs; but they were quickly comforted by seeing his place and their number miraculously filled up. A centinel was warming himself near the bath, having been posted there to observe if any of the martyrs were inclined to submit. While he was attending, he had a vision of blessed spirits descending from heaven on the martyrs, and distributing, as from their king, rich presents, and precious garments, St. Ephrem adds crowns, to all these generous soldiers, one only excepted, who was their faint-hearted companion, already mentioned. The guard, being struck with the celestial vision and the apostate's desertion, was converted upon it; and by a particular motion of the Holy Ghost, threw off his clothes, and placed himself in his stead amongst the thirty-nine martyrs. Thus God heard their request, though in another manner than they imagined: "Which ought to make us adore the impenetrable secrets of "his mercy and justice," says St. Ephrem, "in this instance,

[b] St. Gregory of Nyssa says, that they endured three days and three nights, this lingering death, which carried of their limbs one after another.

"no less than in the reprobation of Judas, and the election of St. Matthias."

In the morning the judge ordered both those that were dead with the cold, and those that were still alive, to be laid on carriages, and cast into a fire. When the rest were thrown into a waggon to be carried to the pile, the youngest of them (whom the acts call Melito) was found alive; and the executioners hoping he would change his resolution when he came to himself, left him behind. His mother, a woman of mean condition, and a widow, but rich in faith and worthy to have a son a martyr, observing this false compassion, reproached the executioners; and when she came up to her son, whom she found quite frozen, not able to stir, and scarce breathing, he looked on her with languishing eyes, and made a little sign with his weak hand to comfort her. She exhorted him to persevere to the end, and, fortified by the Holy Ghost, took him up, and put him with her own hands into the waggon with the rest of the martyrs, not only without shedding a tear, but with a countenance full of joy, saying courageously: "Go, go, son; proceed to "the end of this happy journey with thy companions, that "thou mayest not be the last of them that shall present "themselves before God." Nothing can be more inflamed or more pathetic than the discourse which St. Ephrem puts into her mouth, by which he expresses her contempt of life and all earthly things, and her ardent love and desire of eternal life. This holy father earnestly entreats her to conjure this whole troop of martyrs to join in imploring the divine mercy in favour of his sinful soul.[1] Their bodies were burned, and their ashes thrown into the river; but the Christians secretly carried off, or purchased part of them with money. Some of these precious relicks were kept at Cæsarea, and St. Basil says of them: "Like bulwarks they "are our protection against the inroads of enemies."[2] He adds, that every one implored their succour, and that they

[1] S. Ephrem, Or. in '40 Mart. t. 2. Op. Gr. and Lat. p. 354. ed. Nov. Vatic. an. 1743.—[2] St. Basil, Or. 20. p. 459.

raised up those that had fallen, strengthened the weak, and invigorated the fervour of the saints. SS. Basil and Emmelia, the holy parents of St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Peter of Sebaste, and St. Macrina, procured a great share of these relicks.[3] St. Emmelia put some of them in the church she built near Anneses, the village where they resided. The solemnity with which they were received, was extraordinary, and they were honoured by miracles, as St. Gregory relates. One of these was a miraculous cure wrought on a lame soldier, the truth of which he attests from his own knowledge, both of the fact and the person who published it every where. He adds: "I buried the bodies of my parents "by the relicks of these holy martyrs, that in the resurrec- "tion they may rise with the encouragers of their faith; for "I know they have great power with God, of which I have "seen clear proofs and undoubted testimonies." St. Gaudentius, bishop of Brescia, writes in his sermon on these martyrs: "God gave me a share of these venerable relicks, "and granted me to found this church in their honour."[4] He says, that the two nieces of St. Basil, both abbesses, gave them to him as he passed by Cæsarea, in a journey to Jerusalem; which venerable treasure they had received from their uncle. Portions of their relicks were also carried to Constantinople, and there honoured with great veneration, as Sozomen,[5] and Procopius[6] have recorded at large, with an account of several visions and miracles, which attended the veneration paid to them in that city.

Though we are not all called to the trial of martyrdom, we are all bound daily to fight and to conquer too. By multiplied victories which we gain over our passions and spiritual enemies, by the exercise of meekness, patience, humility, purity, and all other virtues, we shall render our triumph complete, and attain to the crown of bliss. But are we not confounded at our sloth in our spiritual warfare, when we look on the conflicts of the martyrs? "The eloquence of "the greatest orators, and the wisdom of the philosophers

[3] St. Greg. Nyss. Or. 3. de 40 mart. t. 2. p. 212, 213.—[4] S. Gaud. Brix. Serm 17. de 40 mart.—[5] L. 9. c. 1, 2.—[6] L. 1. de ædific. Justinian. c. 7.

"were struck dumb: the very tyrants and judges stood "amazed, and were not able to find words to express their "admiration, when they beheld the faith, the cheerfulness "and constancy of the holy martyrs in their sufferings. But "what excuse shall we allege in the tremendous judgment, "who, without meeting with such cruel persecution and tor- "ments, are so remiss and slothful in maintaining the spi- "ritual life of our souls, and the charity of God! What shall "we do in that terrible day, when the holy martyrs, placed "near the throne of God, with great confidence shall display "their glorious scars, the proofs of their fidelity? What shall "we then shew? shall we produce our love for God? true "faith? a disengagement of our affections from earthly "things? souls freed from the tyranny of the passions? re- "tirement and peace of mind? meekness? alms-deeds and "compassion? holy and pure prayer? sincere compunction? "watching and tears? Happy shall he be whom these works "shall attend. He shall then be the companion of the mar- "tyrs, and shall appear with the same confidence before "Christ and his Angels. We beseech you, O most holy "martyrs, who cheerfully suffered torments and death for "his love, and are now more familiarly united to him, that "you intercede with God for us slothful and wretched sin- "ners, that he bestow on us the grace of Christ by which "we may be enlightened and enabled to love him."[7]

ST. DROCTOVÆUS, ABBOT.

King Childebert having built at Paris a famous abbey in honour of St. Vincent, this saint, who was a native of the diocess of Autun, had been educated under St. Germanus, abbot of St. Symphorian's at Autun, and was a person eminent for his learning and extraordinary spirit of mortification and prayer, was appointed the second, according to Duplessis,[1] according to others, the first Abbot of this house, since called St. Germain-des-Prez, in which he died about

[7] S. Ephrem Homil. in SS. Martyres, Op. Gr. and Lat. ed. Vat. an. 1743. t. 2. p. 341.—[1] Duplessies Annales de Paris, p. 60. 68.

the year 580. His body is kept in that abbey, and he is honoured by the Church on the tenth of March. His original life being lost, Gislemar, a Benedictin monk of this house, in the ninth age, collected from tradition and scattered memoirs that which we have in Bollandus, and more accurately in Mabillon.

ST. MACKESSOGE, OR KESSOGE, C.

BISHOP IN THE PROVINCES OF LEVIN AND BOIN, IN SCOTLAND.

By his instructions and counsels the pious king Congal II. governed with extraordinary prudence, zeal, and sanctity. This saint was illustrious for miracles, and died in 560. A celebrated church in that country still bears the title of Saint Kessoge-Kirk. The Scots for their cry in battle for some time used his name, but afterward changed it for that of St. Andrew. They sometimes painted St. Kessoge in a soldier's habit, holding a bow bent with an arrow in it. See the Aberdeen Breviary, the chronicle of Pasley (a great monastery of regular Canons in the shire of Renfrew,) Florarium, and Buchanan, l. 5.

MARCH XI.

ST. EULOGIUS OF CORDOVA, P. M.

From his authentic life by Alvarus, his intimate friend, and from his works, Bibl. Patr. t. 9. See Acta Sanct. t. 7. Fleury, b. 48. p. 57.

A. D. 859.

St. Eulogius was of a senatorian family of Cordova, at that time the capital of the Moors or Saracens, in Spain. Those infidels had till then tolerated the Christian religion among

the Goths, exacting only a certain tribute every new moon. Our saint was educated among the clergy of the church of St. Zoilus, a martyr, who suffered at Cordova, with nineteen others, under Dioclesian, and is honoured on the twenty-seventh of June. Here he distinguished himself by his virtue and learning; and being made priest, was placed at the head of the chief ecclesiastical school in Spain, which then flourished at Cordova. He joined assiduous watching, fasting and prayer, to his studies: and his humility, mildness, and charity gained him the affection and respect of every one. He often visited the monasteries for his further instruction in virtue, and prescribed rules of piety for the use of many fervent souls that desired to serve God. Some of the Christians were so indiscreet as openly to inveigh against Mahomet, and expose the religion established by him. This occasioned a bloody persecution at Cordova, in the twenty-ninth year of Abderrama III. the eight hundred and fiftieth year of Christ. Reccafred, an apostate bishop, declared against the martyrs: and, at his solicitation, the bishop of Cordova and some others were imprisoned, and many priests, among whom was St. Eulogius, as one who encouraged the martyrs by his instructions. It was then that he wrote his Exhortation to Martyrdom,[1] addressed to the virgins Flora and Mary, who were beheaded the twenty-fourth of November, in 851. These virgins promised to pray as soon as they should be with God, that their fellow-prisoners might be restored to their liberty. Accordingly St. Eulogius and the rest were enlarged six days after their death. In the year 852, several suffered the like martyrdom, namely, Gumisund and Servus-Dei: Aurelius and Felix with their wives: Christopher and Levigild: Rogel and Servio-Deo. A council at Cordova, in 852, forbade any one to offer himself to martyrdom. Mahomet succeeded his father upon his sudden death by an apoplectic fit; but continued the persecution, and put to death, in 853, Fandila, a monk, Anastasius, Felix, and three nuns, Digna, Columba, and Pomposa. St. Eulogius encouraged all these martyrs to their triumphs, and was the

[1] Documentum martyrii, t. 9. Bibl. Patr. p. 699.

support of that distressed flock. His writings still breathe an inflamed zeal and spirit of martyrdom. The chief are his history of these martyrs, called the Memorial of the Saints, in three books; and his Apology for them against calumniators, shewing them to be true martyrs, though without miracles.[a] His brother was deprived of his place, one of the first dignities of the kingdom. St. Eulogius himself was obliged by the persecutors to live always, after his releasement, with the treacherous bishop Reccafred, that wolf in sheep's cloathing. Wherefore he refrained from saying mass, that he might not communicate with that domestic enemy.

The archbishop of Toledo dying in 858, St. Eulogius was canonically elected to succeed him; but there was some obstacle that hindered him from being consecrated; though he did not outlive his election two months. A virgin, by name Leocritia, of a noble family among the Moors, had been instructed from her infancy in the christian religion by one of her relations, and privately baptized. Her father and mother perceiving this, used her very ill, and scourged her day and night to compel her to renounce the faith. Having made her condition known to St. Eulogius and his sister Anulona, intimating that she desired to go where she might freely exercise her religion, they secretly procured her the means of getting away from her parents, and concealed her for some time among faithful friends. But the matter was at length discovered, and they were all brought before the Cadi. Eulogius offered to shew the judge the true road to heaven, and to demonstrate Mahomet to be an impostor. The Cadi threatened to have him scourged to death. The martyr told him his torments would be to no purpose; for he would never change his religion. Whereupon the Cadi gave orders that he should be carried to the palace, and presented before the king's council. One of the lords of the council took the saint aside, and said to him: "Though the ignorant "unhappily run headlong to death, a man of your learning "and virtue ought not to imitate their folly. Be ruled by

[a] Some objected to these martyrs, that they were not honoured with frequent miracles as those had been who suffered in the primitive ages.

"me, I entreat you: say but one word, since necessity requires "it: you may afterward resume your own religion, and we "will promise that no inquiry shall be made after you." Eulogius replied, smiling: "Ah! if you could but conceive the "reward which waits for those who persevere in the faith to "the end, you would renounce your temporal dignity in "exchange for it." He then began boldly to propose the truths of the gospel to them. But to prevent their hearing him, the council condemned him immediately to lose his head. As they were leading him to execution, one of the eunuchs of the palace gave him a blow on the face for having spoken against Mahomet: he turned the other cheek, and patiently received a second. He received the stroke of death out of the city-gates, with great cheerfulness, on the eleventh of March, 859. St. Leocritia was beheaded four days after him, and her body thrown into the river Bœtis, or Guadalquivir, but taken out by the Christians. The church honours both of them on the days of their martyrdom.

If we consider the conduct of Christ toward his church, which he planted at the price of his precious blood, and treats as his most beloved spouse, we shall admire a wonderful secret in the adorable councils of his tender providence. This church, so dear to him, and so precious in his eyes, he formed and spread under a general most severe and dreadful persecution. He has exposed it in every age to frequent and violent storms, and seems to delight in always holding at least some part or other of it in the fiery crucible. But the days of its severest trials were those of its most glorious triumphs. Then it shone above all other periods of time with the brightest examples of sanctity, and exhibited both to heaven and to men on earth the most glorious spectacles and triumphs. Then were formed in its bosom innumerable most illustrious heroes of all perfect virtue, who eminently inherited, and propagated in the hearts of many others, the true spirit of our crucified Redeemer. The same conduct God in his tender mercy holds with regard to those chosen souls which he destines to raise, by special graces, highest in his favour. When the counsels of divine providence shall be

manifested to them in the next life, then they shall clearly see that their trials were the most happy moments, and the most precious graces of their whole lives. In sicknesses, humiliations, and other crosses, the poison of self-love was expelled from their hearts, their affections weaned from the world, opportunities were afforded them of practising the most heroic virtues, by the fervent exercise of which their souls were formed in the school of Christ, and his perfect spirit of humility, meekness, disengagement, and purity of the affections, ardent charity, and all other virtues, in which true christian heroism consists. The forming of the heart of one saint is a great and sublime work, the masterpiece of divine grace, the end and the price of the death of the Son of God. It can only be finished by the cross on which we were engendered in Christ, and the mystery of our predestination is accomplished.

ST. SOPHRONIUS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM, C.

He was a native of Damascus, and made such a progress in learning that he obtained the name of the Sophist. He lived twenty years near Jerusalem, under the direction of John Moschus, an holy hermit, without engaging himself in a religious state. These two great men visited together the monasteries of Egypt, and were detained by St. John the Almoner, at Alexandria, about the year 610, and employed by him two years in extirpating the Eutychians, and in reforming his diocess. John Moschus wrote there his Spiritual Meadow, which he dedicated to Sophronius. He made a collection in that book of the edifying examples of virtue which he had seen or heard of among the monks, and died shortly after at Rome. Athanasius, patriarch of the Jacobites or Eutychians, in Syria, acknowledged two distinct natures in Christ, the divine and the human; but allowed only one will. This Demi-Eutychianism was a glaring inconsistency; because the will is the property of the nature. Moreover, Christ sometimes speaks of his human will distinct from the divine, as in his prayer in his agony in the garden. This Monothelite heresy seemed an expedient whereby to compound with the Eutychians.

The emperor Heraclius confirmed it by an edict called Ecthesis, or the Exposition, declaring that there is only one will in Christ, namely, that of the Divine Word: which was condemned by pope John IV. Cyrus, bishop of Phasis, a virulent Monothelite, was by Heraclius preferred to the patriarchate of Alexandria, in 629. St. Sophronius, falling at his feet, conjured him not to publish his erroneous articles; but in vain. He therefore left Egypt, and came to Constantinople, where he found Sergius, the crafty patriarch, sowing the same error in conjunction with Theodorus of Pharan. Hereupon he travelled into Syria, where, in 634, he was, against his will, elected patriarch of Jerusalem.

He was no sooner established in this see, than he assembled a council of all the bishops of his patriarchate, in 634, to condemn the Monothelite heresy, and composed a synodal letter to explain and prove the catholic faith. This excellent piece was confirmed in the sixth general council. St. Sophronius sent this learned epistle to pope Honorius and to Sergius. This latter had, by a crafty letter and captious expressions, persuaded pope Honorius to tolerate a silence as to one or two wills in Christ. It is evident from the most authentic monuments, that Honorius never assented to that error, but always adhered to the truth.[1] However a silence was ill-timed, and though not so designed, might be deemed by some a kind of connivance; for a rising heresy seeks to carry on its work under ground without noise: it is a fire which spreads itself under cover. Sophronius, seeing the emperor and almost all the chief prelates of the East conspire against the truth, thought it his duty to defend it with the greater zeal. He took Stephen, bishop of Doria, the eldest of his suffragans, led him to Mount Calvary, and there adjured him by Him who was crucified on that place, and by the account which he should give him at the last day, "to go to the apostolic "see, where are the foundations of the holy doctrine, and "not to cease to pray till the holy persons there should ex-"amine and condemn the novelty." Stephen did so, and staid at Rome ten years, till he saw it condemned by pope

[1] See Nat. Alexander, Sæc. 7. Wittasse and Tournely Tr. de Incarn.

Martin I. in the council of Lateran, in 649. Sophronius was detained at home by the invasion of the Saracens. Mahomet had broached his impostures at Mecca, in 608, but being rejected there, fled to Medina, in 622. Aboubeker succeeded him in 634 under the title of Caliph, or vicar of the prophet. He died after a reign of two years. Omar, his successor, took Damascus in 636, and, after a siege of two years, Jerusalem, in 638. He built a mosque in the place of Solomon's temple, and because it fell in the night, the Jews told him it would not stand unless the cross of Christ, which stood on Mount Calvary, was taken away: which the Caliph caused to be done.[2] Sophronius, in a sermon on the exaltation of the cross, mentions the custom of taking the cross out of its case at Mid-Lent to be venerated.[3] Photius takes notice that his works breathe an affecting piety, but that the Greek is not pure. They consist of his synodal letter, his letter to pope Honorius, and a small number of scattered sermons. He deplored the abomination of desolation set up by the Mahometans in the holy place. God called him out of those evils to his kingdom on the eleventh of March, 639, or as Papebroke thinks,[4] in 644. See the council of Lateran, t. 6. Conc. Fleury, b. 37, 38. and Le Quien Oriens Christ. t. 3. p. 264.

ST. ÆNGUS, B. C.

This saint is distinguished by the surname of Kele-De, that is Worshipper of God; which began in his time to be the denomination of monks in the Scotish language, commonly called Culdees. He was born in Ireland, in the eighth century, of the race of the Dalaradians, kings of Ulster. In his youth, renouncing all earthly pretensions, he chose Christ for his inheritance, embracing a religious state in the famous monastery of Cluain-Edneach in East-Meath. Here he became

[2] Theophanes, p. 284.—[3] In medio jejunii, adorationis gratiâ, proponi solet vitale lignum venerandæ crucis. Sophr. Serm. in Exalt. Crucis. Bibl. Patr. t. 12. p. 214. et apud Gretser, t. 2. de Cruce, p. 88.—[4] Papebr. Tr. prælim. ad t. 3. Maii, n. 144. p. 32.

so great a proficient both in learning and sanctity, that no one in his time could be found in Ireland that equalled him in reputation for every kind of virtue, and for sacred knowledge. To shun the esteem of the world, he disguised himself, and going to the monastery of Tamlâcht, three miles from Dublin, lived there seven years unknown, in the quality of a lay-brother, performing all the drudgery of the house, appearing fit for nothing but the vilest employs, whilst his interior by perfect love and contemplation was absorpt in God. Being at length discovered, he some time after returned to Cluain-Edneach, where the continual austerity of his life, and his constant application to God in prayer, may be more easily admired than imitated. He was chosen abbot, and at length raised to the episcopal dignity: for it was usual then in Ireland for eminent abbots in the chief monasteries to be bishops. He was remarkable for his devotion to the saints, and he left both a longer and a shorter Irish Martyrology, and five other books concerning the saints of his country, contained in what the Irish call Saltair-na-Rann. He died about the year 824, not at Cluain-Edneach, but at Desert Æenguis, which became also a famous monastery, and took its name from him. See his acts in Colgan, p. 579.

ST. CONSTANTINE, M.

He is said to have been a British king, who, after the death of his queen, resigned the crown to his son, and became a monk in the monastery of St. David. It is added that he afterward went into North Britain, and joined St. Columba in preaching the gospel amongst the Picts, who then inhabited a great part of what is now called Scotland. He founded a monastery at Govane, near the river Cluyd, converted all the land of Cantire to the faith of Christ, and died a martyr by the hands of infidels, toward the end of the sixth century. He was buried in his monastery of Govane, and divers churches were erected in Scotland, under his invocation. But it seems most probable that the Scotish martyr is not the same person with the British king. Colgan supposes him

to have been an Irish monk, who had lived in the community of St. Carthag, at Rathane.[a]

MARCH XII.

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE, C.

From his works, Bede, and Paul, deacon of Monte Cassino, towards the end of the eighth century. His life in four books, by John deacon of Rome in the ninth age, is full of mistakes, as Baronius observes. See his history, compiled in French by Dom Dionysius of Sainte-Marthe, superior general, of the Maurist monks, printed at Rouen in 4to. 1697, and more accurately in Latin by the same author, in the 4to. tome of this father's works, in 1705. See also Fleury, b. 34, 35, 36. Mabillon, Annal. Bened. l. 6. t. 1. Ceillier, t. 17. p. 128. F. Wietrowski, S. J. Historia de rebus in Pontificatu, S. Gregorii M. gestis, in fol. Gradonici, S. Gregorius, M. Pontifex, a criminationibus Oudini vindicatus, and Hieron. Muzio in Coro Pontificale.

A. D. 604.

St. Gregory, from his illustrious actions and extraordinary virtues, surnamed the Great, was born at Rome, about the year 540. Gordianus, his father, enjoyed the dignity of a senator, and was very wealthy; but after the birth of our saint, renounced the world, and died Regionarius, that is, one of the seven cardinal deacons who took care of the ecclesiastical districts of Rome. His mother, Sylvia, consecrated herself to God in a little oratory near St. Paul's. Our saint was called Gregory, which in Greek implies a watchman, as Vigilius and Vigilantius in Latin. In his youth he applied himself, with unabated diligence, to the studies of grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy; and after these first accomplishments, to the civil law and the canons of the church, in

[a] See the MSS. Lives of Scotish Saints, compiled by a Jesuit, who was nephew of bishop Lesley, kept in the Scotish College at Paris. Several Scotish historians give the title of saint to Constantine III. king of the Scots, who, forsaking his crown and the world, entered himself amongst the Culdees, or religious men of St. Andrew's, in 946.

which he was perfectly skilled. He was only thirty-four years old when, in 574, he was made, by the emperor Justin the Younger, pretor, or governor and chief magistrate of Rome. By this dignity he was the chief judge of the city; his pomp and state differed little from that of a consul, and he was obliged to wear the Trabea, which was a rich robe of silk, magnificently embroidered, and sparkling with precious stones: a garment only allowed to the consuls and pretor. But he could say, with Esther, that his heart always detested the pride of the world. From his infancy he loved and esteemed only heavenly things, and it was his chief delight to converse with holy monks, or to be retired in his closet, or in the church at his devotions. After the death of his father, he built and endowed six monasteries in Sicily out of the estates which he had in that island, and founded a seventh in his own house in Rome, which was the famous monastery of St. Andrew, on the hill Scaurus,* now possessed by the Order of Camaldoli. The first abbot of this house was Hilarion, the second Valentinus, under whom St. Gregory himself took the monastic habit, in 575, being thirty-five years old. In this retirement, Gregory applied himself with that vigour to fasting and the study of the sacred writings, that he thereby contracted a great weakness in his stomach, and used to fall into fits of swooning if he did not frequently eat. What gave him the greatest affliction was his not being able to fast on an Easter-Eve, a day on which, says John the deacon, every one, not even excepting little children, are used to fast. His great desire of conforming to the universal practice on that day occasioned his applying to a monk of eminent sanctity, named Eleutherius, with whom having prayed, and besought God to enable him to fast at least on that sacred day, he found himself on a sudden so well restored, that he not only fasted that day, but quite forgot his illness, as he himself relates.(1)

It was before his advancement to the see of Rome, or even to the government of his monastery, that he first, as Paul the

* See Annot. at the end of the life, p. 145 infra.

(1) Dial. l. 3. c. 33.

See Greg. 15. July. pag. 175.

deacon testifies, projected the conversion of the English nation. This great blessing took its rise from the following occasion.[2] Gregory happened one day to walk through the market, and here taking notice that certain youths of fine features and complexion, were exposed to sale, he enquired what countrymen they were, and was answered, that they came from Britain. He asked if the people of that country were Christians or heathens, and was told they were still heathens. Then Gregory fetching a deep sigh, said: It was a lamentable consideration that the prince of darkness should be master of so much beauty, and have so comely persons in his possession: and that so fine an outside should have nothing of God's grace to furnish it within.[a] This incident made so great an impression upon him, that he applied himself soon after to pope Benedict I. and earnestly requested that some persons might be sent to preach Christianity in Britain. And not finding any one disposed to undertake that mission, he made an offer of himself for the service, with the pope's

[2] Hist. b. 2. c. 1.

[a] Bede adds, that he again asked, what was the name of that nation, and was answered, that they were called Angli or Angles. "Right, (said he) for they "have angelical faces, and it becomes "such to be companions with the angels "in heaven. What is the name (pro-"ceeded he) of the province from which "they are brought." It was replied, that the natives of that were called Deiri. "Truly Deiri, because withdrawn from "wrath, and called to the mercy of "Christ," said he, alluding to the Latin, De irâ Dei eruti. He asked farther, "How "is the king of that province called?" They told him his name was Alle; and he, making an allusion to the word, said: "Alleluiah, the praise of God the Crea-"tor, must be sung in those parts." Some censure this conversation of Saint Gregory as a piece of low punning. But the taste of that age must be considered. St. Austin found it necessary to play sometimes with words to please auditors whose ears had, by custom, caught an itch to be sometimes tickled by quibbles to their fancy. The ingenious author of the late life of the lord chancellor Bacon, thought custom an apology for the most vicious style of that great man, of whom he writes: "His style has been objected to "as full of affectation, full of false elo-"quence. But that was the vice, not "of the man, but of the times he lived "in; and particularly of a court that "delighted in the tinsel of wit and learn-"ing, in the poor ingenuity of punning "and quibbling." St. Gregory was a man of a fine genius and of true learning: yet in familiar converse might conform to the taste of the age. Far from censuring his wit, or the judgment of his historian, we ought to admire his piety, which, from every circumstance, even from words, drew illusions to nourish devotion, and turn the heart to God. This we observe in other saints, and if it be a fault, we might more justly censure on this account the elegant epistles of Saint Paulinus, or Sulpitius Severus, than this dialogue of St. Gregory.

consent and approbation. Having obtained leave, he privately set forward on his journey, in company with several monks of his own monastery. But when his departure was known, the whole city was in an uproar, and the people ran in a body to the pope, whom they met going to St. Peter's church. They cried out to him in the utmost consternation: "Apostolical father, what have you done? In suffering Gre- "gory to go away, you have destroyed Rome: you have un- "done us, and offended St. Peter." At these pressing instances the pope despatched messengers to recall him: and the saint being overtaken by them on the third day, was obliged, though with great reluctance, to return to Rome. Not long after, the same pope, according to John the deacon, and the Benedictins, or as Paul the deacon, and Baronius say, his successor Pelagius II. made him one of the seven deacons of the church at Rome, who assisted the pope. Pelagius II. sent him to Constantinople in quality of Apocrisiarius, or Nuncio of the holy see, to the religious emperor Tiberius, by whom the saint was received and treated with the highest distinction. This public employment did not make him lay aside the practices of a monastic life, in order to which he had taken with him certain monks of his house, with whom he might the better continue them, and by their example excite himself to recollection and prayer. At the request of St. Leander, bishop of Seville, whom he saw at Constantinople, he wrote in that city his thirty-five books of Morals upon Job, giving chiefly the moral and allegorical interpretations of that sacred book, in such a manner as to reduce into one body the most excellent principles of morality, and also of an interior life, of both which this admirable work hath been ever since regarded as the great storehouse and armory. Out of it St. Isidore, St. Thomas, and other masters of those holy sciences have chiefly drawn their sublime maxims. Mauritius having married the daughter of Tiberius, in 582, who had the empire for her dowry, St. Gregory was pitched upon to stand god-father to his eldest son. Eutychius was at that time patriarch of Constantinople.[b] This prelate, having

[b] Eutychius had formerly defended the catholic faith with great zeal against the Eutychians and the errors of the emperor Justinian, who, though he con-

suffered for the faith under Justinian, fell at length into an error, importing, that after the general resurrection the glorified bodies of the elect will be no longer palpable, but of a more subtile texture than air. This error he couched in a certain book which he wrote. St. Gregory was alarmed, and held several conferences with the patriarch upon that subject both in private and before the emperor, and clearly demonstrated from the scriptures, that the glorified bodies of the saints will be the same which they had on earth, only delivered from the appendixes of mortality; and that they will be palpable as that of Christ was after his resurrection.[3] The good bishop being docile and humble, retracted his mistake, and shortly after falling sick, in presence of the emperor, who had honoured him with a visit, taking hold of his skin with his hand, said: "I profess the belief that we shall all rise in this very flesh.[c]

Pope Pelagius recalled St. Gregory in 584. He brought with him to Rome an arm of St. Andrew, and the head of St. Luke, which the emperor had given him. He placed both these relicks in his monastery of St. Andrew, where the former remains to this day; but the latter has been removed thence to St. Peter's, where it still continues. The saint with joy saw himself restored to the tranquillity of his cell, where he eagerly desired to bury himself with regard to the world, from which he had fled naked into this secure harbour; because, as he signified to St. Leander, he saw how difficult a thing it is to converse with the world without contracting inordinate attachments.[d] Pope Pelagius also made him his secretary. He still continued to govern

[3] St. Greg. Moral. l. 14. c. 76. t. 1. p. 465.

demned those heretics, yet adopted one part of their blasphemies, asserting that Christ assumed a body which was by its own nature incorruptible, not formed of the Blessed Virgin, and subject to pain, hunger, or alteration only by a miracle. This was called the heresy of the Incorrupticolæ, of which Justinian declared himself the abetter; and, after many great exploits to retrieve the ancient glory of the empire, tarnished his reputation by persecuting the catholic church and banishing Eutychius.

[c] He died in 582, and is ranked by the Greeks among the saints. See the Bollandists in vitâ S. Eutychii ad 6. Apr.

[d] Fleury thinks he was chosen abbot before his embassy to Constantinople; but Ceillier and others prove, that this only happened after his return.

his monastery, in which he shewed a remarkable instance of severity. Justus, one of his monks, had acquired and kept privately three pieces of gold, which he confessed on his death-bed. St. Gregory forbade the community to attend and pray by his bed-side, according to custom; but could not refuse him the assistance of a priest, which the council of Nice ordained, that no one should be deprived of at the hour of death. Justus died in great sentiments of compunction; yet, in compliance with what the monastic discipline enjoins in such cases, in imitation of what St. Macarius had prescribed on the like occasion, he ordered his corpse to be buried under the dung-hill, and the three pieces of money to be thrown into the grave with it. Nevertheless, as he died penitent, he ordered mass to be daily offered up for him during thirty days.[e] St. Gregory says,[4] that after the mass of the thirtieth day, Justus appearing to his brother Copiosus, assured him that he had been in torments, but was then released. Pope Pelagius II. dying in the beginning of the great pestilence, in January 590, the clergy, senate, and Roman people unanimously agreed to choose St. Gregory for their bishop, although he opposed his election with all his power. It was then the custom at the election of a pope to consult the emperor as the head of the senate and people. Our saint, trusting to his friendship with Mauritius, to whose son he stood god-father, wrote to him privately to conjure him not to approve of this choice. He wrote also with great earnestness to John, patriarch of Constantinople, and to other powerful friends in that city, begging them to employ their interest with the emperor for that purpose: but complains in several letters afterward that they had all refused to serve him. The governor of Rome intercepted his letters to the emperor, and sent others

[4] Dial. l. 4. c. 55. p. 465. t. 2.

[e] It appears from the life of Saint Theodosius the Cenobiarch, from Saint Ambrose's Funeral oration on Valentinian, and other monuments, that it was the custom from the primitive ages, to keep the third, seventh, and thirtieth, or sometimes fortieth day after the decease of a Christian, with solemn prayers and sacrifices for the departed soul. From this fact of Saint Gregory a trental of masses for a soul departed are usually called the Gregorian masses, on which see Gavant and others.

to him in the name of the senate and people to the contrary effect. In the mean time, the plague contined to rage at Rome with great violence; and while the people waited for the emperor's answer, St. Gregory took occasion from their calamities to exhort them to repentance. Having made them a pathetic sermon on that subject,[f] he appointed a solemn litany, or procession, in seven companies, with a priest at the head of each, who were to march from different churches, and all to meet in that of St. Mary Major; singing Kyrie Eleison as they went along the streets. During this procession there died in one hour's time fourscore of those who assisted at it. But St. Gregory did not forbear to exhort the people and to pray till such time as the distemper ceased.[g] During the public calamity, St. Gregory seemed to have forgot the danger he was in of being exalted to the pontifical throne; for he feared as much to lose the security of his poverty as the most avaricious can do to lose their treasures. He had been informed that his letters to Constantinople had been intercepted: wherefore, not being able to go out of the gates of Rome, where guards were placed, he prevailed with certain merchants to carry him off disguised, and shut up in a wicker basket. Three days he lay concealed in the woods and caverns, during which time the people of Rome observed fasts and prayers. Being miraculously discovered,[h] and no longer able, as he says himself,[5] to resist, after the manifestation of the divine will, he was taken, brought back to Rome with great acclamations, and consecrated on the third of September, in 590. In this ceremony he was conducted, according to custom, to the Confession of St. Peter, as his tomb is called; where he made a profession of his faith, which is still extant in his works. He sent also to the other patriarchs a synodal epistle, in which was contained the profession of his faith.[6] In it he declares, that he received the four general

[5] L. 1. Ep. 21. L. 7. Ep. 4.—[6] L. 1. Ep. 25.

[f] It is inserted by St. Gregory of Tours in his history. Greg. Touron. l. 10. c. 1.

[g] Some moderns say, an angel was seen sheathing his sword on the stately pile of Adrian's sepulchre. But no such circumstance is mentioned by St. Gregory of Tours, Bede, Paul, or John.

[h] Paul the deacon says, it was by a pillar of light appearing over the place where he lay concealed.

councils as the four gospels. He received congratulatory letters upon his exaltation; to all which he returned for answer rather tears than words, in the most feeling sentiments of profound humility. To Theoctista, the emperor's sister, he wrote thus.[7] "I have lost the comfort of my calm, and "appearing to be outwardly exalted, I am inwardly and really "fallen.—My endeavours were to banish corporeal objects "from my mind, that I might spiritually behold heavenly "joys. Neither desiring nor fearing any thing in the world, "I seemed raised above the earth, but the storm had cast me "on a sudden into alarms and fears: I am come into the "depth of the sea, and the tempest hath drowned me." He adds: "The emperor hath made an ape to be called a lion; "but cannot make him become one." In his letter to Narses the patrician, he says:[8] "I am so overcome with grief, that "I am scarce able to speak. My mind is encompassed with "darkness. All that the world thinks agreeable, brings to "me trouble and affliction." To St. Leander he writes: "I "remember with tears that I have lost the calm harbour of "my repose, and with many a sigh I look upon the firm land "which I cannot reach. If you love me, assist me with your "prayers." He often invites others to weep with him, and conjures them to pray for him. John, archbishop of Ravenna, modestly reprehended his cowardice in endeavouring, by flight, to decline the burden of the pastoral charge. In answer to his censure, and to instruct all pastors, soon after his exaltation, he wrote his incomparable book On the Pastoral Care, setting forth the dangers, duties, and obligations of that charge, which he calls, from St. Gregory Nazianzen, The art of arts, and science of sciences. So great was the reputation of this performance, as soon as it appeared, that the emperor Mauritius sent to Rome for a copy; and Anastasius, the holy patriarch of Antioch, translated it into Greek. Many popes and councils have exhorted and commanded pastors of souls frequently to read it, and in it, as in a looking-glass, to behold themselves.[9] Our English saints made it always their rule,

[7] L. 1. Ep. 5. p. 491.—[8] L. 1. Ep. 6. p. 498.—[9] Conc. 3. Touron. Can. 3. See Dom. Bulteau's Preface to his French translation of S. Gregory's Pastoral, printed in 1629.

and king Alfred translated it into the Saxon tongue. In this book we read a transcript of the sentiments and conduct of our excellent pastor. His zeal for the glory of God, and the angelical function of paying him the constant tribute of praise in the church, moved him, in the beginning of his pontificate, to reform the church-music.[1] Preaching he regarded as the

[1] He reformed the Sacramentary, or Missal and Ritual of the Roman church. In the letters of SS. Innocent I. Celestine I. and St. Leo, we find mention made of a written Roman Order of the mass: in this the essential parts were always the same; but accidental alterations in certain prayers have been made. Pope Gelasius thus augmented and revised the liturgy, in 490; his genuine Sacramentary was published at Rome by Thomasi, in 1680. In it are mentioned the public veneration of the cross on Good-Friday: the solemn Benediction of the Holy Oils, the ceremonies of baptism, frequent invocation of saints, veneration shewn to their relicks, the benediction of holy water, votive masses for travellers, for the sick and the dead, masses on festivals of saints, and the like. The Sacramentary of Saint Gregory differs from that of Gelasius only in some collects or prayers. The conformity between the present church-office and the ancient appears from this work, and the saint's Antiphonarius and Responsorium. The like ceremonies and benedictions are found in the apostolic constitutions, and all other ancient liturgic writings; out of which Grabe, Hickes, Deacon, and others have formed new liturgies very like the present Roman, and several of them have restored the idea of a true sacrifice. Dom. Menard has enriched the Sacramentary of St. Gregory with most learned and curious notes.

Besides his Comments or Morals on the book of Job, which he wrote at Constantinople, about the year 582, in which we are not to look for an exposition of the text, but an excellent compilation of the main principles of morality, and an interior life, we have his exposition of Ezekiel, in twenty-two homilies. These were taken in short-hand as he pronounced them, and were preached by him at Rome, in 592, when Agilulph the Lombard, was laying waste the whole territory of Rome. See L. 2. in Ezech. hom. 6. and Paul the deacon, L. 4. hist. Longob. c. 8. The exposition of the text is allegorical, and only intended for ushering in the moral reflections, which are much shorter than in the books on Job. His forty homilies on the gospels he preached on several solemnities whilst he was pope. His incomparable book On the Pastoral Care, which is an excellent instruction of pastors, and was drawn up by him when he saw himself placed in the pontificate, consists of four parts. In the first he treats of the dispositions requisite in one who is called to the pastoral charge; in the second of duties of a pastor; in the third on the instruction which he owes to his flock; and in the fourth, on his obligation of watching over his own heart, and of diligent self-examination. In four books of dialogues, betwixt himself and his disciple Peter, he recounts the miracles of his own times, upon the authority of vouchers, on whose veracity he thought he could rely. He so closely adheres to their relations, that the style is much lower than in his other writings. See the preface of the Benedictin editor on this work. His letters are published in fourteen books, and are a very interesting compilation. We have St. Gregory's excellent exposition of the book of Canticles, which Ceillier proves to be genuine against Oudin, the apostate, and some others. The six books on the first book of Kings are a valuable work, but cannot be ascribed to St. Gregory the Great. The commentary on the seven penitential psalms, Ceillier thinks to be his work: but it seems doubtful. Paterius, a notary, one of St. Gregory's auditors, compiled, out of his writings and sermons, several comments on the scriptures. Claudius, abbot of Classius, a disciple of our saint, did the same. Alulphus, a

principal and most indispensable function of every pastor of souls, as it is called by St. Thomas, and was most solicitous to feed his flock with the word of God. His forty homilies on the gospels, which are extant, shew that he spoke in a plain and familiar style, and without any pomp of words, but with a surprising eloquence of the heart. The same may be said of his twenty-two homilies on Ezekiel, which he preached whilst Rome was besieged by the Lombards, in 592. In the nineteenth he, in profound humility, applies to himself, with tears, whatever the prophet spoke against slothful mercenary pastors. Paul the deacon relates, that after the saint's death, Peter the deacon, his most intimate friend, testified that he had seen in a vision, as an emblem of the Holy Ghost, a dove appear on his head, applying his bill to his ear whilst he was writing on the latter part of Ezekiel.

This great pope always remembered, that, by his station, he was the common father of the poor. He relieved their necessities with so much sweetness and affability, as to spare them the confusion of receiving the alms; and the old men among them he, out of deference, called his fathers. He often entertained several of them at his own table. He kept by him an exact catalogue of the poor, called by the ancients matriculæ; and he liberally provided for the necessities of each. In the beginning of every month he distributed to all the poor, corn, wine, pulse, cheese, fish, flesh, and oil: he appointed officers for every street to send every day necessaries to all the needy sick; before he eat he always sent off meats from his own table to some poor persons. One day a beggar being found dead in a corner of a by-street, he is said to have abstained some days from the celebration of the divine mysteries condemning himself of a neglect in seeking the poor with sufficient care. He entertained great numbers of strangers both at Rome and in other countries, and

monk at Tournay, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, made the like compilations from his writings. Dom. Dionysius, of St. Marthe, a Maurist Benedictin monk, favoured the world with an accurate edition of the works of St. Gregory the Great, published at Paris in four volumes folio, in 1705. This has been reprinted at Verona, and again at Ausburgh, in 1758, with the addition of the useful anonymous book, De formula Prælatorum.

had every day twelve at his own table whom his sacristan invited. He was most liberal in redeeming captives taken by the Lombards, for which he permitted the bishop of Fano to break and sell the sacred vessels,[10] and ordered the bishop of Messana to do the same.[11] He extended his charity to the heretics, whom he sought to gain by mildness. He wrote to the bishop of Naples to receive and reconcile readily those who desired it, taking upon his own soul the danger,[k] lest he should be charged with their perdition if they should perish by too great severity. Yet he was careful not to give them an occasion of triumphing by any unreasonable condescension; and much more not to relax the severity of the law of God in the least tittle.[12] He shewed great moderation to the schismatics of Istria, and to the very Jews. When Peter, bishop of Terracina, had taken from the latter their synagogue, St. Gregory ordered it to be restored to them, saying, they are not to be compelled, but converted by meekness and charity.[13] He repeated the same orders for the Jews of Sardinia, and for those of Sicily.[14] In his letters to his vicar in Sicily, and to the stewards of the patrimony of the Roman church in Africa, Italy, and other places, he recommends mildness and liberality towards his vassals and farmers; orders money to be advanced to those that were in distress, which they might repay by little and little, and most rigorously forbids any to be oppressed. He carefully computed and piously distributed the income of his revenues at four terms in the year. In his epistles, we find him continually providing for the necessities of all churches, especially of those in Italy, which the wars of the Lombards and other calamities had made desolate. Notwithstanding his meekness and condescension, his courage was undaunted, and his confidence in the divine assistance unshaken amidst the greatest difficulties. "You know me," says he,[15] "and that "I tolerate a long while; but when I have once determined "to bear no longer, I go with joy against all dangers." Out

[10] L. 6. Ep. 35.—[11] L. 7. Ep. 26.—[12] L. 1. Ep. 35, &c.—[13] L. 1. Ep. 35. [14] L. 7. Ep. 5. l. 12. Ep. 30.—[15] L. 4. Ep. 47.

[k] Animæ nostræ pericula, l. 1. Ep. 14.

of sincere humility he styled himself "the basest of men, "devoured by sloth and laziness."[16] Writing to St. Leander, he says,[17] he always desired to be the contempt of men and the outcast of the people. He declares,[18] "I am ready "to be corrected by all persons, and him only do I look upon "as my friend by whose tongue I learn to wash away the "stains of my mind." He subscribed himself in all his letters, Servant of the servants of God, which custom has been retained by his successors. Indeed what is a pastor or superior but the servant of those for whom he is to give a rigorous account to God? The works of St. Gregory were every where received with the greatest applause. Marinianus, archbishop of Ravenna, read his comments on Job to the people in the church. The saint was afflicted and confounded that his writings should be thought to deserve a place among the approved works of the fathers; and wrote to that prelate that his book was not proper for the church, admonishing him rather to read St. Austin on the psalms.[19] He was no less dead to himself in his great actions, and all other things. He saw nothing in himself but imperfections, and subjects of confusion and humiliation.

It is incredible how much he wrote, and, during the thirteen years that he governed the church, what great things he achieved for the glory of God, the good of the church, the reformation of manners, the edification of the faithful, the relief of the poor, the comfort of the afflicted, the establishment of ecclesiastical discipline, and the advancement of piety and religion. But our surprise redoubles upon us, when we remember his continual bad state of health and frequent sicknesses, and his assiduity in prayer and holy contemplation: though this exercise it was that gave always wings to his soul. In his own palace he would allow of no furniture but what was mean and simple, nor have any attendants near his person but clergymen or monks of approved virtue, learning, and prudence. His household was a model of christian perfection; and by his care, arts, sciences, and the heroic practice of piety, flourished, especially in the city

[16] Præf. in Dial.—[17] L. 9. Ep. 221.—[18] L. 2. Ep. 121.—[19] L. 12. Ep. 24.

of Rome. The state of Christendom was at that time on every side miserably distracted, and stood in need of a pastor, whose extraordinary sanctity, abilities, and courage should render him equal to every great enterprise. And such a one was Gregory. The eastern churches were wretchedly divided and shattered by the Nestorians, and the numerous spawn of the Eutychians: all which he repressed. In the west, England was buried in idolatry, and Spain, under the Visigoths, was over-run with the Arian heresy. These two flourishing countries owe their conversion, in a great measure, to his zeal, especially the former. In Africa, he extirpated the Donatists; converted many schismatics in Istria and the neighbouring provinces; and reformed many grievous abuses in Gaul, whence he banished simony, which had almost universally infected that church. A great part of Italy was become a prey to the Lombards,[1] who were partly Arians, partly idolaters. St. Gregory often stopped the fury of their arms, and checked their oppressions of the people: by his zeal he also brought over many to the catholic faith, and had the comfort to see Agilulph, their king, renounce the Arian heresy to embrace it. In 592, Romanus, exarch, or governor of Italy for the emperor, with a view to his own private interest, perfidiously broke the solemn treaty which he had made with the Lombards,[20] and took Perugia and several other towns. But the barbarians, who were much the stronger, revenged this insult with great cruelty, and be-

[20] Paul Diac. de Gest. Longobard. l. 4. c. 8. S. Greg. l. 2. Ep. 46.

[1] The Lombards came originally from Scandinavia, and settled first in Pomerania, and afterward with the Hunns in Pannonia, who had remained there when they returned out of Italy under Attila. Narses, the patrician, after having governed Italy sixteen years with great glory, was recalled by the emperor Justin the Younger. But resenting this treatment, he invited the Lombards into that country. Those Barbarians leaving Pannonia to the Hunns, entered Italy, easily made themselves masters of Milan, under their king Albolnus, in 568; and extending their dominions, often threatened Rome itself. In the reign of Charles the Fat, the Hunns were expelled Pannonia by the Hongres, another swarm from the same northern hive, a-kin to the Hunns, who gave to that kingdom the name of Hungary. That the Lombards were so called, not from their long swords, as some have pretended, but from their long beards, see demonstrated from the express testimony of Paul the Deacon, himself a Lombard, of Constantine Porphyrogenetta, by Jos. Assemani, Hist. Ital. scriptor. t. 1. c. 3. p. 33.

sieged Rome itself. St. Gregory neglected nothing to protect the oppressed, and raised troops for the defence of several places. At length, by entreaties and great presents, he engaged the Lombards to retire into their own territories. He reproved the exarch for his breach of faith, but to no other effect than to draw upon himself the indignation of the governor and his master. Such were the extortions and injustices of this and other imperial officers, that the yoke of the barbarians was lighter than the specious shadow of liberty under the tyranny of the empire: and with such rigour were the heaviest taxes levied, that, to pay them, many poor inhabitants of Corsica were forced to sell their own children to the barbarians. These oppressions cried to heaven for vengeance: and St. Gregory wrote boldly to the empress Constantina,[21] entreating that the emperor, though he should be a loser by it, would not fill his exchequer by oppressing his people, nor suffer taxes to be levied by iniquitous methods which would be an impediment to his eternal salvation. He sent to this empress a brandeum, or veil, which had touched the bodies of the apostles, and assured her that miracles had been wrought by such relicks.[22] He promised to send her also some dust-filings of the chains of St. Paul; of which relicks he makes frequent mention in his epistles. At Cagliari, a certain rich Jew, having been converted to the faith, had seized the synagogue in order to convert it into a church, and had set up in it an image of the Virgin Mary and a cross. Upon the complaint of the other Jews, St. Gregory ordered[23] the synagogue to be restored to them, but that the image and cross should be first removed with due veneration and respect.[m] Writing to Theodelinda, queen of the Lombards, he mentions,[24] that he sent her son, the young king, a little cross, in which was a particle of the wood of the true Cross, to carry about his neck. Secundinus, an holy hermit near Ravenna, god-father to this young

[21] L. 5. Ep. 41.—[22] L. 4. Ep. 30.—[23] L. 9. Ep. 6. p. 930.—[24] L. 14. Ep. 12. p. 1270.

[m] Sublatâ exinde, quâ par est veneratione, imagine et cruce. L. 9. Ep. 6. p. 930.

king, begged of the pope some devout pictures. St. Gregory, in his answer, says: "We have sent you two cloths, containing the picture of God our Saviour, and of Mary the holy Mother of God, and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and one cross: also for a benediction, a key which hath been applied to the most holy body of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, that you may remain defended from the enemy."[n] But when Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, had broken certain sacred images which some persons lately converted from idolatry honoured with their former idolatrous superstitions, St. Gregory commended his zeal for suppressing this abuse, but reproved him for breaking the images.[25] When the archbishop of Ravenna used the pallium, not only at mass, but also in other functions, St. Gregory wrote him a severe reprimand, telling him, that no ornament shines so bright on the shoulders of a bishop as humility.[26][o] He extended his pastoral zeal and solicitude over all churches; and he frequently takes notice that the care of the churches of the whole world was entrusted to St. Peter, and his successors in the see of Rome.[27] This authority he exerted in the oriental patriarchates. A certain monk having been accused of Manicheism, and beaten by the order of John the patriarch of Constantinople, appealed to pope Gregory, who sharply reprimanded the patriarch, exhorting him to eject a certain wicked young man by whom he suffered himself to be governed, and to do penance, and telling him: "If you

[25] L. 11. Ep. 13.—[26] L. 3. Ep. 56. l. 3. Ep. 53. l. 9. Ep. 59. l. 6. Ep. 66. l. 7. Ep. 19. l. 5. Ep. 20.—[27] L. 3. Ep. 39. l. 5. Ep. 13.

[n] These words are quoted by Paul the deacon, in the council of Rome, Conc, t. 6. p. 1462, and pope Adrian I. in his letter to Charlemagne in defence of holy images.

[o] St. Gregory was always a zealous asserter of the celibacy of the clergy, which law he extended also to subdeacons, who had before been ranked among the clergy of the Minor orders. (l. 1. ep. 44. l. 4. Ep. 34.) The Centuriators, Heylin and others, mention a forged letter, under the name of Udalricus, said to be written to pope Nicholas, concerning the heads of children found by St. Gregory in a pond. But a more ridiculous fable was never invented, as is demonstrated from many inconsistencies of that forged letter; and St. Gregory in his epistles every where mentions the law of the celibacy of the clergy as ancient and inviolable. Nor was any pope Nicholas cotempory with St. Udalricus See Baronius and Dom. de Sainte Marthe, in his life of St. Gregory.

" do not keep the canons, I know not who you are."[28] He absolved the monk, with his colleague, a priest, re-established them in their monastery, and sent them back into the East, having received their profession of faith. He also absolved John, a priest of Chalcedon, who had been unjustly condemned by the delegates of the patriarch. This patriarch John, surnamed the Faster, usurped the arrogant title of oecumenical, or universal patriarch. This epithet was only used of a general council which represents the whole church. In this sense an oecumenical bishop should mean a bishop who represents the whole church, so that all other bishops are only his vicars. St. Gregory took the word in that sense: which would be blasphemy and heresy, and as such he condemned it.[29] John indeed only meant it in a limited sense for an archbishop over many, as we call him a general who commands many; but even so it savoured of arrogance and novelty. In opposition to this, St. Gregory took no other titles than those of humility. Gregoria, a lady of the bed-chamber to the empress, being troubled with scruples, wrote to St. Gregory, that she should never be at ease till he should obtain of God, by a revelation, an assurance that her sins were forgiven her. To calm her disturbed mind, he sent her the following answer.[30] " You ask what is both difficult " and unprofitable. Difficult, because I am unworthy to re- " ceive any revelation: unprofitable, because an absolute " assurance of your pardon does not suit your state till you " can no longer weep for your sins. You ought always to " fear and tremble for them, and wash them away by daily " tears. Paul had been taken up to the third heaven, yet " trembled lest he should become a reprobate.—Security is " the mother of negligence."

The emperor forbade any to be admitted in monasteries, who having been in office had not yet given up their accounts, or who were engaged in the military service. This order he sent to each of the patriarchs to be by them notified to all the bishops of their respective districts. St. Gregory, who was

[28] L. 6. Ep. 15, 16, 17.—[29] L. 11. ep. 28. olim 58. p. 1180, &c.—[30] L. 7 ep. 25.

at that time sick, complied with the imperial mandate, so far as to order the edict to be signified to the western bishops,(p) as appears from a letter which he wrote to the emperor as soon as his health was re-established. We learn from another letter, which he wrote some years after to the bishops of the empire, that on this occasion he exhorted the bishops to comply with the first part, and as to the second, not to suffer persons engaged in the army to be admitted among the clergy, or to the monastic habit, unless their vocation had been thoroughly tried for the space of three years, that it might be evident they were converted from the world, and sought not to change one kind of secular life for another. He made to Mauritius the strongest remonstrances against this edict, saying, "It is not agreeable to God, seeing by it the way to heaven "was shut to several; for many cannot be saved unless they "forsake all things." He therefore entreated the emperor to mitigate this law, approving the first article as most just, unless the monastery made itself answerable for the debts of such a person received in it. As to the second, he allows that the motives and sincerity of the conversion of such soldiers are to be narrowly examined before they ought to be admitted to the monastic habit. Mauritius, who had before conceived certain prejudices against St. Gregory, was offended at his remonstrances, and shewed his resentment against him for some years. But at length agreed to the mitigations of each article proposed by St. Gregory: which the holy pope with great pleasure notified by a letter addressed to the bishops of the empire.(51)

(51) Ep. 55.

(p) Some Protestants slander St. Gregory, as if by this publication of the imperial edict he had concurred to what he condemned as contrary to the divine law. Dr. Mercier, in his letter in favour of a law commanding silence, with regard to the constitution Unigenitus in France, in 1759, pretends that this holy pope thought obedience to the emperor a duty even in things of a like nature. But Dr. Launay, Reponse a la lettre d'un docteur de Sorbonne, partie 2. p. 51. and Dr. N. Examen de la lettre d'un docteur de Sorbonne sur la necessitè de garder le silence sur la Constitution Unigenitus, p. 32. T. 1. demonstrate that St. Gregory regarded the matter, as it really is, merely as a point of discipline, and no where says the edict was contrary to the divine law, but only not agreeable to God, and tending to prejudice the interest of his greater glory. In matters of faith or essential obligation he calls forth the zeal and fortitude of prelates to stand upon their guard in opposing unjust laws, even to martyrdom, as the same authors demonstrate.

The emperor Mauritius having broken his league with the Avari, a Scythian nation, then settled on the banks of the Danube,[32] was defeated, and obliged to purchase an ignominious peace. He also refused to ransom the prisoners they had taken, though they asked at first only a golden penny a head, and at last only a sixth part, or four farthings; which refusal so enraged the barbarians, that they put them all to the sword. Mauritius began then to be stung with remorse, gave large alms, and prayed that God would rather punish him in this life than in the next. His prayer was heard. His avarice and extortions had rendered him odious to all his subjects; and in 602, he ordered the army to take winter-quarters in the enemy's country, and to subsist on free-booting, without pay. The soldiers exasperated at this treatment, chose one Phocas, a daring ambitious man, to be their leader, and marched to Constantinople, where he was crowned emperor. Mauritius had made his escape, but was taken with his family thirty miles out of the city, and brought back. His five sons were slain before his eyes at Chalcedon: he repeated all the while as a true penitent these words: "Thou "art just, O Lord, and thy judgments are righteous."[33] When the nurse offered her own child instead of his youngest, he would not suffer it. Last of all he himself was massacred after a reign of twenty years. His empress Constantina was confined with her three daughters, and murdered with them a few months after. The tyrant was slain by Heraclius, governor of Africa, after a tottering reign of eight years. When Phocas mounted the throne, his images were received and set up at Rome: nor could St. Gregory, for the sake of the public good, omit writing to him letters of congratulation.[34] In them he makes some compliments to Phocas, which are not so much praises as respectful exhortations to a tyrant in power, and wishes of the public liberty, peace and happiness.[q] The saint no where approved his

[32] Theophanes Chronogr.—[33] Ps. 118.—[34] L. 13. ep. 31, 38.

[q] We say the same of the compliments which he paid to the impious French queen Brunehault, at which lord Bolingbroke takes offence; but a respect is due to persons in power. Saint Gregory no where flatters their vices, but admonishes by compliments those who could not be approached without them. Thus did

injustices or tyranny, though he regarded him like Jehu, as the instrument of God to punish other sinners. He blamed Mauritius, but in things truly blameable; and drew from his punishment a seasonable occasion of wholesome advice which he gave to Phocas, whom the public safety of all Italy obliged him not to exasperate.

This holy pope had laboured many years under a great weakness of his breast and stomach, and was afflicted with slow fevers, and frequent fits of the gout, which once confined him to his bed two whole years. On the twenty-fifth of January, 604, he gave to the church of St. Paul several parcels of land to furnish it with lights: the act of donation remains to this day engraved on a marble stone in the same church. God called him to himself on the twelfth of March the same year, about the sixty-fourth of his age, after he had governed the church thirteen years, six months, and ten days. His pallium, the reliquary which he wore about his neck, and his girdle were preserved long after his death, when John the deacon wrote, who describes his picture drawn from the life, then to be seen in the monastery of St. Andrew. [r] His holy remains rest in the Vatican church. Both the Greeks and Latins honour his name. The council of Clif, or Cloveshove, under archbishop Cuthbert, in 747, commanded his feast to be observed a holy-day in all the monasteries in England; which the council of Oxford, in 1222, extended to the whole kingdom. This law subsisted till the change of religion.[s]

Every superior, who is endued with the sincere spirit of humility and charity, looks upon himself with this great hope, as the servant of all, bound to labour and watch night and

St. Paul address Agrippa and Festus, &c. In refusing the sacraments of the church to impenitent wicked princes, and in checking their crimes by seasonable remonstrances, Saint Gregory was always ready to exert the zeal of a Baptist: as he opposed the unjust projects of Mauritius, so would he have done those of Phocas when in his power.

[r] The antiquarians will read with pleasure the curious notes of Angelus Rocca, and the Benedictins on the pictures of St. Gregory and his parents, and on this holy pope's pious donations.

[s] St. Gregory gave St. Austin a small library which was kept in his monastery at Canterbury. Of it there still remain a book of the gospels in the Bodleian library, and another in that of Corpus-Christi in Cambridge. The other books were Psalters, the Pastorale, the Passionarium Sanctorum, and the like. See Mr. Wanley, in his catalogue of Saxon manuscripts, at the end of Dr. Hickes's

day, to bear every kind of affront, to suffer all manner of pains, to do all in his power, to put on every shape, and sacrifice his own ease and life to procure the spiritual improvement of the least of those who are committed to his charge. He is incapable of imperious haughtiness, which alienates the minds of inferiors, and renders their obedience barely exterior and a forced hypocrisy. His commands are tender entreaties, and if he is obliged to exert his authority, this he does with secret repugnance, losing sight of himself, intent only on God's honour and his neighbour's salvation, placing himself in spirit beneath all his subjects, and all mankind, and esteeming himself the last of all creatures. St. Paul, though vested with the most sublime authority, makes use of terms so mild and so powerfully ravishing, that they must melt the hardest heart. Instead of commanding in the name of God, see how he usually expresses himself. "I entreat "you, O Timothy, by the love which you bear me. I conjure "you, by the bowels of Jesus Christ. I beseech you, by the "meekness of Christ. If you love me, do this." And see how he directs us to reprove those who sin. "If any one "should fall, do you who are spiritual remind him in the "spirit of meekness, remembering that you may also fall," and into a more grievous crime. St. Peter, who had received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, shed more tears of tender charity than he speaks words. What heart can be so savage and unnatural, as to refuse to obey him who, having authority to lay injunctions, and thunder out anathemas, weeps instead of commanding. If SS. Peter and Paul pour out the water of tears and mildness, St. John casts darts of fire into the hearts of those whom he commands. "My little children," says he, "if you love Christ, do this. I conjure you, by Christ "our good Master, love affectionately, and this is enough. "Love will teach you what to do. The unction of the Holy "Ghost will instruct you." This is the true spirit of go verning; a method sure to gain the hearts of others, and to inspire them with a love of the precept itself and of virtue.

Thesaurus, p. 172. Many rich vestments, vessels, relicks, and a pall given by Saint Gregory to St. Austin, were kept in the same monastery. Their original inventory, drawn up by Thomas of Elmham in the reign of Henry V. is preserved in the Harleian library, and published by the learned lady, Mrs. E. Elstob, at the end of a Saxon panegyric on St. Gregory.

St. Macarius of Egypt was styled the god of the monks, so affectionately and readily was he obeyed by them, because he never spoke a word with anger or impatience. Moses was chosen by God to be the leader and legislator of his people, because he was the meekest of men: and with what astonishing patience did he bear the murmurs and rebellions of an ungrateful and stiff-necked people? David's meekness toward Saul and others purchased him the crown, and was one of the principal virtues by which he was rendered a king according to God's own heart. Those who command with imperious authority shew they are puffed up with the empty wind of pride, which makes them feel an inordinate pleasure in the exercise of power, the seed of tyranny, and the bane of virtue in their souls. Anger and impatience, which are more dangerous, because usually canonized under the name of zeal, demonstrate persons to be very ill qualified for governing others, who are not masters of themselves or their own passions. How few are so crucified to themselves, and so perfectly grounded in humility, patience, meekness, and charity, that power and authority infect not their souls with the deadly poison of secret pride, or in whom no hurry, importunity, or perverseness can extinguish the spirit of meekness, in which in all occurrences they preserve the same evenness of mind, and the same angelical sweetness of countenance. Yet with this they are sons of thunder in resisting evil, and in watching against all the artifices of the most subtle and flattering passions of sinners, and are firm and inflexible in opposing every step towards any dangerous relaxation. St. Gregory, by his whole conduct, sets us an example of this perfect humility and meekness, which he requires as an essential qualification in every pastor, and in all who are placed over others.[35] He no less excelled in learning, with which he says, that humility must be accompanied, lest the pastor should lead others astray. But above all other qualities for the pastoral charge, he requires an eminent gift of prayer and contemplation. Præ cæteris contemplatione suspensus. Pastor. Cura, part 2. c. 5.

[35] Gregor. M. in l. 1. Reg. c. 16. v. 3. & 9.

Annotation on the Life of St. Gregory.

BARONIUS thinks that his monastery of St. Andrew's followed the rule of St. Equitius, because its first abbots were drawn out of his province Valeria. On another side, Dom. Mabillon (T. 1. Actor. Sanct. & t. 2. Analect. and Annal. Bened. l. 6.) maintains that it followed the rule of St. Benedict, which St. Gregory often commends and prefers to all other rules. His colleagues, in their life of St. Gregory, Natalis Alexander, in his Church History, and others, have wrote to support the same opinion: who all, with Mabillon, borrow all their arguments from the learned English Benedictin, Clemens Reynerus, in his Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia. Others object that St. Gregory in his epistles ordains many things contrary to the rule of St. Benedict, and think he who has wrote so much concerning St. Benedict, would have mentioned by some epithet the circumstance of being his disciple, and would have called the rule of that patriarch his own. These antiquaries judge it most probable that the monastery of St. Andrew had its own rule prescribed by the first founders, and borrowed from different places: for this was the ordinary method of most monasteries in the west, till afterward the rule of St. Benedict was universally received for better uniformity and discipline: to which the just commendations of St. Gregory doubtless contributed.

F. Clement Reyner, in the above-mentioned book, printed at Doway, in folio, in 1626, displays much erudition in endeavouring to prove that St. Austin, and the other monks sent by St. Gregory to convert the English, professed the order of St. Benedict. Mabillon borrows his arguments on this subject in his preface to the Acts of the Benedictins, against the celebrated Sir John Marsham, who in his long preface to the Monasticon, sets himself to shew that the first English monks followed rules instituted by their own abbots, often gleaned out of many. Dr. Hickes confirms this assertion against Mabillon with great erudition, (Diss. p. 67, 68.) which is espoused by Dr. Tanner, bishop of S. Asaph's, in his preface to his exact Notitia Monastica, by the author of Biographia Britannica, in the life of Bede, (T. 1. p. 656.) and by the judicious William Thomas, in his additions to the new edition of Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire. (t. 1. p. 157.) These authors think that the rule of St. Benedict was not generally received by the English monks before the regulations of St. Dunstan; nor perfectly till after the Norman conquest. For pope Constantine, in 709, in the bull wherein he establishes the rule of St. Benedict to be followed in the abbey of Evesham, says of it: Which does not prevail in those parts. "Quæ "minus in illis partibus habetur." In 747, Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, in a synod held in presence of Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, at Cloveshove, (which town some place in Kent, others more probably in Mercia, about Reading) published Monastic Constitutions, which were followed by the English monks till the time of St. Dunstan. In these we find no mention of the rule of St. Benedict; nor in Bede. The charter of king Ethelbald which mentions the Black Monks, is a manifest forgery. Even that name was not known before the institution of the Camaldulenses, in 1020, and the Carthusians, who distinguished themselves by white habits. Dom. Mege, in his commentary on the rule of St. Benedict, shews that the first Benedictins wore white, not black. John of Glastenbury, and others, published by Hearne, who call the apostles of the English, Black Monks, are too modern, unless they produced some ancient vouchers. The monastery of Evesham adopted the rule of St. Benedict, in 709. St. Bennet Biscop and St. Wilfrid both improved the monastic order in the houses which they founded, from the rule of St. Benedict, at least

SAINT MAXIMILIAN, M.

He was the son of Victor, a christian soldier in Numidia. According to the law which obliged the sons of soldiers to serve in the army at the age of twenty-one years, his measure was taken that he might be enrolled in the troops, and he was found to be of due stature, being five Roman feet and ten inches high,[a] that is, about five feet and an half of our measure. But Maximilian refused to receive the mark, which was a print on the hand, and a leaden collar about the neck, on which were engraved the name and motto of the emperor. His plea was, that in the Roman army superstitions, contrary to the christian faith, were often practised, with which he could not defile his soul. Being condemned by the proconsul to lose his head, he met death with joy in the year 296. See his acts in Ruinart.

ST. PAUL, BISHOP OF LEON, C.

He was a noble Briton, a native of Cornwall, cousin of St. Samson, and his fellow-disciple under St. Iltutus. We need no other proof of his wonderful fervour and progress in virtue, and all the exercises of a monastic life, than the testi-

[a] See Tr. sur la Milice Romaine, t. 1.

borrowing some constitutions from it. The devastations of the Danes scarce left a convent of monks standing in England, except those of Glastenbury and Abingdon, which was their state in the days of king Alfred, as Leland observes. Saint Dunstan, St. Oswald, and St. Ethelwold restored the monasteries, and propagated exceedingly the monastic state. St. Oswald had professed the order of St. Benedict in France, in the monastery of Fleury; and, together with the aforesaid two bishops, he established the same in a great measure in England. St. Dunstan published an uniform rule for the monasteries of this nation, entitled, Regularis Concordiæ Anglicæ Nationis, extant in Reyner and Spelman, (in Spicilegio ad Eadmerum, p. 145.) in which he adopts in a great measure, the rule of St. Benedict, joining with it many ancient monastic customs. Even after the Norman conquest the synod of London, under Lanfranc, in 1075, says, the regulations of monks were drawn from the rule of St. Bennet and the ancient custom of regular places, as Baronius takes notice: which seems to imply former distinct institutes. From that time down to the dissolution, all the cathedral priories, except that of Carlisle, and most of the rich abbeys in England, were held by monks of the Benedictin order. See Dr. Brown Willis, in his separate histories of Cathedral Priories, Mitred Abbeys, &c.

mony of St. Iltutus, by whose advice St. Paul left the monastery to embrace a more perfect eremitical life in a retired place in the same country. Some time after, our saint sailing from Cornwall, passed into Armorica, and continued the same austere eremitical life in a small island on the coast of the Osismians, a barbarous idolatrous people in Armorica, or Little Britain. Prayer and contemplation were his whole employment, and bread and water his only food, except on great festivals, on which he took with his bread a few little fish. The saint, commiserating the blindness of the Pagan inhabitants on the coast, passed over to the continent, and instructed them in the faith. Withur, count or governor of Bas, and all that coast, seconded by king Childebert, procured his ordination to the episcopal dignity, notwithstanding his tears to prevent it. Count Withur, who resided in the Isle of Bas, bestowed his own house on the saint to be converted into a monastery; and St. Paul placed in it certain fervent monks, who had accompanied him from Wales and Cornwall. He was himself entirely taken up in his pastoral functions, and his diligence in acquitting himself of every branch of his obligations was equal to his apprehension of their weight. When he had completed the conversion of that country, he resigned his bishoprick to a disciple, and retired into the isle of Bas, where he died in holy solitude on the twelfth of March, about the year 573, near one hundred years old.[a] During the inroads of the Normans, his relicks were removed to the abbey of Fleury, or St. Bennet's on the Loire, but were lost when the Calvinists plundered that church. Leon, the ancient city of the Osismians, in which he fixed his see, takes his name. His festival occurs in the ancient Breviary of Leon, on the tenth of October, perhaps the day of the translation of his relicks. For in the ancient Breviary of Nantes, and most others, he is honoured on the twelfth of March. See Le Cointe's Annals, the Bollandists

[a] St. Paul was ordained priest before he left Great Britain, about the year 530. The little island on the coast of Armorica, where he chose his first abode in France, was called Medonia, and seems to be the present Molene, situated between the isle of Ushant and the coast. The first oratory which he built on the continent, very near this island, seems to be the church called from him Lan-Pol.

on this day, and Lobineau in the lives of the saints of Britanny, from his acts compiled by a monk of Fleury, about the close of the tenth century.

MARCH XIII.

ST. NICEPHORUS, C.

PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE,

From his life by Ignatius, deacon of Constantinople, afterward bishop of Nice, a contemporary author; and from the relation of his banishment by Theophanes. See Fleury, l. 45, 46, 47. Ceillier, T. 18. p. 467.

A. D. 828.

Theodorus, the father of our saint, was secretary to the emperor Constantine Copronymus: but when that tyrant declared himself a persecutor of the catholic church, the faithful minister remembering that we are bound to obey God rather than man, maintained the honour due to holy images with so much zeal, that he was stripped of his honours, scourged, tortured, and banished. The young Nicephorus was from his cradle animated to the practice of virtue by the domestic example of his father: and in his education, as his desires of improvement were great, and the instructions he had very good, the progress he made was as considerable; till, by the maturity of his age, and of his study, he made his appearance in the world. When Constantine and Irene were placed on the imperial throne, and restored the catholic faith, our saint was quickly introduced to their notice, and by his merits attained a large share in their favour. He was by them advanced to his father's dignity, and by the lustre of his sanctity was the ornament of the court, and the support of the state. He distinguished himself by his zeal against the Iconoclasts, and was secretary to the second council of

Nice. After the death of St. Tarasius, patriarch of Constantinople, in 806, no one was found more worthy to succeed him than Nicephorus. To give an authentic testimony of his faith, during the time of his consecration he held in his hand a treatise which he had written in defence of holy images, and after the ceremony laid it up behind the altar, as a pledge that he would always maintain the tradition of the church. As soon as he was seated in the patriarchal chair, he began to consider how a total reformation of manners might be wrought, and his precepts from the pulpit received a double force from the example he set to others in an humble comportment, and steady uniform practice of eminent piety.[a] He applied himself with unwearied diligence to all the duties of the ministry; and by his zealous labours, and invincible meekness and patience, kept virtue in countenance, and stemmed the tide of iniquity. But these glorious successes rendered him not so conspicuous as the constancy with which he despised the frowns of tyrants, and suffered persecution for the sake of justice.

The government having changed hands, the patrician Leo the Armenian, governor of Natolia, became emperor in 813, and being himself an Iconoclast, endeavoured both by artifices and open violence to establish that heresy. He studied in the first place, by crafty suggestions, to gain over the holy patriarch to favour his design. But St. Nicephorus answered him: "We cannot change the ancient traditions: we respect "holy images as we do the cross and the book of the gospels." For it must be observed that the ancient Iconoclasts venerated the book of the gospels, and the figure of the cross, though by an inconsistency usual in error, they condemned the like relative honour with regard to holy images. The saint shewed, that far from derogating from the supreme honour of God, we honour him when for his sake we pay a subordinate respect to his angels, saints, prophets, and ministers: also when we give a relative inferior honour to inanimate things

[a] The Confession of faith which upon his promotion he sent to pope Leo III. is published by Baronius, ad an. 811. and in the seventh tome of Labbe's councils, &c. In it the saint gives a clear exposition of the principal mysteries of faith, of the invocation of saints, and the veneration due to relicks and holy images.

which belong to his service, as sacred vessels, churches, and images. But the tyrant was fixed in his errors, which he at first endeavoured to propagate by stratagems. He therefore privately encouraged soldiers to treat contemptuously an image of Christ which was on a great cross at the brazen gate of the city; and thence took occasion to order the image to be taken off the cross, pretending he did it to prevent a second profanation. St. Nicephorus saw the storm gathering, and spent most of his time in prayer with several holy bishops and abbots. Shortly after, the emperor, having assembled together certain Iconoclast bishops in his palace, sent for the patriarch and his fellow-bishops. They obeyed the summons, but entreated his majesty to leave the government of the church to its pastors. Emilian, bishop of Cyzicus, one of their body said: "If this is an ecclesiastical affair, let it be "discussed in the church, according to custom, not in the "palace." Euthymius, bishop of Sardes, said: "For these "eight hundred years past, since the coming of Christ, there "have been always pictures of him, and he has been honoured "in them. Who shall now have the boldness to abolish so an-"cient a tradition?" St. Theodorus, the Studite, spoke after the bishops, and said to the emperor: "My Lord, do not dis-"turb the order of the church. God hath placed in it apos-"tles, prophets, pastors, and teachers.[1] You he hath en-"trusted with the care of the state; but leave the church to "its pastors." The emperor, in a rage, drove them from his presence. Some time after, the Iconoclast bishops held a pretended council in the imperial palace, and cited the patriarch to appear before them. To their summons he returned this answer: "Who gave you this authority? was it the "pope, or any of the patriarchs? In my diocess you have no "jurisdiction." He then read the canon which declares those excommunicated who presume to exercise any act of jurisdiction in the diocess of another bishop. They, however, proceeded to pronounce against him a mock sentence of deposition; and the holy pastor, after several attempts made secretly to take away his life, was sent by the emperor into

[1] Eph. iv. 11.

banishment. Michael the Stutterer, who in 820 succeeded Leo in the imperial throne, was engaged in the same heresy, and also a persecutor of our saint, who died in his exile, on the second of June, in the monastery of St. Theodorus, which he had built in the year 828, the fourteenth of his banishment, being about seventy years old. By the order of the empress Theodora, his body was brought to Constantinople with great pomp, in 846, on the thirteenth of March, on which day he is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology.[a]

It is by a wonderful effect of his most gracious mercy and singular love that God is pleased to visit all his faithful servants with severe trials, and to purify their virtue in the crucible, that by being exercised it may be made heroic and perfect. By suffering with patience, and in a christian spirit, a

[a] St. Nicephorus has left us a chronicle from the beginning of the world: of which the best editions are that of F. Goar, with the chronicle of George Syncellus at Paris, in 1652, and that of Venice among the Byzantine historians, in 1729. Also a short history from the reign of Mauritius to that of Constantine and Irene, published at Paris, in 1616, by F. Petau; and reprinted among the Byzantine historians at Paris in 1649, and again at Venice, in 1729. The style is justly commended by Photius. (cod. 66.) The seventeen canons of St. Nicephorus are extant in the collection of the councils, t. 7. p. 1297, &c. In the second he declares it unlawful to travel on Sundays without necessity. Cotelier has published four others of this saint, with five of the foregoing, and his letter to Hilarion and Eustrasius, containing learned resolutions of several cases. (Monum. Græc. t. 3. p. 451.) St. Nicephorus wrote several learned tracts against the Iconoclasts, as three Antirrhetics or Confutations, &c. Some of these are printed in the Library of the Fathers, and F. Combefis's Supplement or Auctuarium, t. 1. in Canisius's Lectiones Antiquæ, republished by Basnage, part 2, &c. But a great number are only found in MSS. in the libraries of England, Paris, and Rome. The saint often urges that the Iconoclasts condemned themselves by allowing veneration to the cross; for the image of Christ upon the cross is more than the bare cross. In the second Antirrhetic he most evidently establishes the real presence of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist; which passage is quoted by Leo Allatius. (l. 3. de consens. Ecclesiæ Occident. & Orient. c. 15. p. 1223.) He does the same almost in the same words, l. de Cherubinis a Moyse factis, c. 7. apud Canis. t. 2. ed. Basm. part. 2. p. 13. & t. 9. Bibl. Patr. Three Antirrhetics are entitled Against Mamonas, (*i. e.* Constantine Copronymus) and the Iconoclasts. A fourth was wrote by him against Eusebius and Epiphanides to prove that Eusebius of Cæsarea was an obstinate Arian, and Epiphanides a favourer of Manicheism, and a very different person from S. Epiphanius of Salamine. F. Anselm Banduri, a Benedictin monk of Ragusa, undertook at Paris a complete edition of the works of St. Nicephorus, in two volumes in folio: but his death prevented the publication. His learned Prospectus, dated in the monastery of St. Germain-des-Prez, in 1705, is inserted by Fabricius in Biblioth. Gr. t. 6. p. 640. and in part by Oudin, de Scrip. t. 2. p. 13.

soul makes higher and quicker advances in pure love, than by any other means or by any other good works. Let no one then repine, if by sickness, persecution, or disgraces, they are hindered from doing the good actions which they desire, or rendered incapable of discharging the duties of their station, or of labouring to convert others. God always knows what is best for us and others: we may safely commend to him his own cause, and all souls which are dearer to him than they can be to us. By this earnest prayer and perfect sacrifice of ourselves to God, we shall more effectually draw upon them the divine mercy than by any endeavours of our own. Let us leave to God the choice of his instruments and means in the salvation of others. As to ourselves, it is our duty to give him what he requires of us: nor can we glorify him by any sacrifice either greater or more honourable, and more agreeable to him than that of an heart under the heaviest pressure, ever submissive to him, embracing with love and joy every order of his wisdom, and placing its entire happiness and comfort in the accomplishment of his adorable most holy will. The great care of a Christian in this state, in order to sanctify his sufferings, must be to be constantly united to God, and to employ his affections in the most fervent interior exercises of entire sacrifice and resignation, of confidence, love, praise, adoration, penance, and compunction, which he excites by suitable aspirations.

ST. EUPHRASIA, V.

Antigonus, the father of this saint, was a nobleman of the first rank and quality in the court of Theodosius the younger, nearly allied in blood to that emperor, and honoured by him with several great employments in the state. He was married to Euphrasia, a lady no less illustrious for her birth and virtue, by whom he had one only daughter and heiress, called also Euphrasia, the saint of whom we treat. After her birth, her pious parents, by mutual consent, engaged themselves by vow, to pass the remainder of their lives in perpetual continence, that they might more perfectly aspire to the invisible joys of the life to come; and from that time they lived

together as brother and sister, in the exercises of devotion, alms-deeds, and penance. Antigonus died within a year, and the holy widow, to shun the importunate addresses of young suitors for marriage, and the distraction of friends, not long after withdrew privately, with her little daughter, into Egypt, where she was possessed of a very lage estate. In that country she fixed her abode near a holy monastery of one hundred and thirty nuns, who never used any other food than herbs and pulse, which they took only after sun-set, and some only once in two or three days; they wore and slept on sackcloth, wrought with their hands, and prayed almost without interruption. When sick, they bore their pains with patience, esteeming them an effect of the divine mercy, and thanking God for the same: nor did they seek relief from physicians, except in cases of absolute necessity, and then only allowed of ordinary general remedies, as the monks of La Trappe do at this day. Delicate and excessive attention to health nourishes self-love and immortification,[a] and often destroys that health which it studies anxiously to preserve. By the example of these holy virgins, the devout mother animated herself to fervour in the exercises of religion and charity, to which she totally dedicated herself. She frequently visited these servants of God, and earnestly entreated them to accept a considerable annual revenue, with an obligation that they should always be bound to pray for the soul of her deceased husband. But the abbess refused the estate, saying: "We "have renounced all the conveniencies of the world, in order "to purchase heaven. We are poor, and such we desire to "remain." She could only be prevailed upon to accept a small matter to supply the church-lamp with oil, and for incense to be burned on the altar.

The young Euphrasia, at seven years of age, made it her earnest request to her mother, that she might be permitted to serve God in this monastery. The pious mother, on hearing this, wept for joy, and not long after presented her to the abbess, who, taking, up an image of Christ, gave it into her

[a] It is severely condemned by Saint Bernard, ep. 345. ol. 321. p. 316. & serm. 50. in Cant. St. Ambrose serm. 22. in Ps. 118. and by Abbot Rance, the reformer of La Trappe.

hands. The tender virgin kissed it, saying: "By vow I "consecrate myself to Christ." Then the mother led her before an image of our Redeemer, and lifting up her hands to heaven, said: "Lord Jesus Christ, receive this child under "your special protection. You alone doth she love and seek: "to you doth she recommend herself."[b] Then turning to her dear daughter, she said: "May God, who laid the foun- "dations of the mountains, strengthen you always in his holy "fear." And leaving her in the hands of the abbess, she went out of the monastery weeping. Some time after this she fell sick, and being forewarned of her death, gave her last instructions to her daughter in these words: "Fear God, "honour your sisters and serve them with humility. Never "think of what you have been, nor say to yourself that you "are of royal extraction. Be humble and poor on earth, that "you may be rich in heaven." The good mother soon after slept in peace. Upon the news of her death, the emperor Theodosius sent for the noble virgin to court, having promised her in marriage to a favourite young senator. But the virgin wrote him with her own hand the following answer: "Invincible emperor, having consecrated myself to Christ in "perpetual chastity, I cannot be false to my engagement, "and marry a mortal man, who will shortly be the food of "worms. For the sake of my parents, be pleased to distri- "bute their estates among the poor, the orphans, and the "church. Set all my slaves at liberty, and discharge my vas- "sals and servants, giving them whatever is their due. "Order my father's stewards to acquit my farmers of all "they owe since his death, that I may serve God without let "or hinderance, and may stand before him without the solici- "tude of temporal affairs. Pray for me, you and your em- "press, that I may be made worthy to serve Christ." The messengers returned with this letter to the emperor, who shed many tears in reading it. The senators who heard it burst also into tears, and said to his majesty: "She is the "worthy daughter of Antigonus and Euphrasia, of your royal

[b] This passage is quoted by St. John Damascen, Or. 3. de Imagin.

"blood, and the holy offspring of a virtuous stock." The emperor punctually executed all she desired, a little before his death, in 395.

St. Euphrasia was to her pious sisters a perfect pattern of humility, meekness, and charity. If she found herself assaulted by any temptation, she immediately discovered it to the abbess, to drive away the devil by that humiliation, and to seek a remedy. The discreet superioress often enjoined her, on such occasions, some humbling and painful penitential labour; as sometimes to carry great stones from one place to another; which employment she once, under an obstinate assault, continued thirty days together with wonderful simplicity, till the devil being vanquished by her humble obedience and chastisement of her body, he left her in peace. Her diet was only herbs or pulse, which she took after sunset, at first every day, but afterward only once in two or three, or sometimes seven days. But her abstinence received its chief merit from her humility; without which it would have been a fast of devils. She cleaned out the chambers of the other nuns, carried water to the kitchen, and, out of obedience, cheerfully employed herself in the meanest drudgery; making painful labour a part of her penance. To mention one instance of her extraordinary meekness and humility: it is related, that one day a maid in the kitchen, asked her why she fasted whole weeks, which no other attempted to do besides the abbess. Her answer was that the abbess had enjoined her that penance. The other called her an hypocrite. Upon which Euphrasia fell at her feet, begging her to pardon and pray for her. In which action it is hard to say, whether we ought more to admire the patience with which she received so unjust a rebuke and slander, or the humility with which she sincerely condemned herself; as if, by her hypocrisy and imperfections, she had been a scandal to others. She was favoured with miracles both before and after her death, which happened in the year 410, and the thirtieth of her age. Her name is recorded on this day in the Roman Martyrology. See her ancient authentic life in Rosweide, p. 351. D'Andilly, and most correct in the Acta Sanctorum, by the Bollandists.

ST. THEOPHANES, ABBOT, C.

His father, who was governor of the isles of the Archipelago, died when he was only three years old, and left him heir to a very great estate, under the guardianship of the Iconoclast emperor, Constantine Copronymus. Amidst the dangers of such an education, a faithful pious servant instilled into his tender mind the most generous sentiments of virtue and religion. Being arrived at man's estate, he was compelled by his friends to take a wife; but on the day of his marriage, he spoke in so moving a manner to his consort on the shortness and uncertainty of this life, that they made a mutual vow of perpetual chastity. She afterward became a nun, and he for his part built two monasteries in Mysia; one of which, called Megal-Agre, near the Propontis, he governed himself. He lived, as it were, dead to the world and the flesh, in the greatest purity of life, and in the exercises of continual mortification and prayer. In 787, he assisted at the second council of Nice, where all admired to see one, whom they had formerly known in so much worldly grandeur, now so meanly clad, so modest, and so full of self-contempt as he appeared to be. He never laid aside his hair shirt; his bed was a mat, and his pillow a stone; his sustenance was hard coarse bread and water. At fifty years of age, he began to be grievously afflicted with the stone and nephritic colic; but bore with cheerfulness the most excruciating pains of his distemper. The emperor Leo, the Armenian, in 814, renewed the persecution against the church, and abolished the use of holy images, which had been restored under Constantine and Irene. Knowing the great reputation and authority of Theophanes, he endeavoured to gain him by civilities and crafty letters. The saint discovered the hook concealed under his alluring baits, which did not, however, hinder him from obeying the emperor's summons to Constantinople, though at that time under a violent fit of the stone; which distemper, for the remaining part of his life, allowed him very short intervals of ease. The emperor sent him this message: "From your mild and obliging disposition, I flatter

" myself you are come to confirm my sentiments on the point " in question with your suffrage. It is your readiest way for " obtaining my favour, and with that the greatest riches and " honours for yourself, your monastery, and relations, which " it is in the power of an emperor to bestow. But if you " refuse to comply with my desires in this affair, you will " incur my highest displeasure, and draw misery and disgrace " on yourself and friends." The holy man returned for answer: " Being now far advanced in years, and much " broken with pains and infirmities, I have neither relish " nor inclination for any of these things which I despised for " Christ's sake in my youth, when I was in a condition to " enjoy the world. As to my monastery and friends, I recom- " mend them to God. If you think to frighten me into a " compliance by your threats, as a child is awed by the rod, " you only lose your labour. For though unable to walk, " and subject to many other corporeal infirmities, I trust in " Christ that he will enable me to undergo, in defence of his " cause, the sharpest tortures you can inflict on my weak " body." The emperor employed several persons to endea- vour to overcome his resolution, but in vain: so seeing himself vanquished by his constancy, he confined him two years in a close stinking dungeon, where he suffered much from his distemper and want of necessaries. He was also cruelly scourged, having received three hundred stripes. In 818, he was removed out of his dungeon, and banished into the isle of Samothracia, where he died in seventeen days after his arrival, on the twelfth of March. His relicks were honoured by many miraculous cures. He has left us his Chronographia, or short history from the year 284, the first of Dioclesian, where George Syncellus left off, to the year 813.[a] His imprisonment did not allow him leisure to polish the style. See his cotemporary life, and the notes of Goar and Combefis, two learned Dominicans, on his works, printed at Paris, in 1655.

[a] George Syncellus (*i. e.* secretary to the patriarch St. Tarasius), an holy monk, and zealous defender of holy images, was a close friend of St. Theophanes, and died about the year 800. In his chronicle are prescribed excellent fragments of Manetho, the Egyptian, of Julius Africanus, Eusebius, &c.

ST. KENNOCHA, VIRGIN IN SCOTLAND,

IN THE REIGN OF KING MALCOLM II.

From her infancy she was a model of humility, meekness, modesty, and devotion. Though an only daughter, and the heiress of a rich and noble family, fearing lest the poison which lurks in the enjoyment of perishable goods, should secretly steal into her affections, or the noise of the world should be an hinderance to her attention to heavenly things and spiritual exercises, she rejected all solicitations of suitors and worldly friends, and, in the bloom of life, made an entire sacrifice of herself to God, by making her religious profession in a great nunnery, in the county of Fife. In this holy state, by an extraordinary love of poverty and mortification, a wonderful gift of prayer, and purity or singleness of heart, she attained to the perfection of all virtues. Several miracles which she wrought made her name famous among men, and she passed to God in a good old age, in the year 1007. Several churches in Scotland bore her name, particularly one near Glasgow, still called St. Kennoch's Kirk, and another called by an abbreviation of her name Kyle, in which her relicks were formerly kept with singular veneration. In the Aberdeen Breviary she is honoured with a particular prayer. She is mentioned by Adam King, in his calendar, and an account of her life is given us in the Chronicle of Scone.

ST. GERALD, BISHOP.

He was an Englishman, who, passing into Ireland, became a monk in the abbey of Megeo, or Mayo, founded by Colman of Lindisfarne, for the English. Gerald was advanced successively to the dignity of abbot and bishop, and founded the abbey of Elytheria, or Tempul-Gerald in Connaught, that of Teagh-na-Saxon, and a nunnery which he put under the care of his sister Segretia. He departed to our Lord in 732, and was buried at Mayo, where a church dedicated to God under his patronage remains to this day. See Colgan.

ST. MOCHOEMOC, IN LATIN, PULCHERIUS, ABBOT.

Having been educated under St. Comgal, in the monastery of Benchor, he laid the foundation of the great monastery of Liath-Mochoemoc, around which a large town was raised, which still bears that name. His happy death is placed by the chronologists on the thirteenth of March, in 655. See Usher's Antiquities in Tab. Chron. and Colgan.

MARCH XIV.

ST. MAUD, OR MATHILDIS,

QUEEN OF GERMANY.

From her life written forty years after her death, by the order of St. Henry; Acta Sanct. t. 7. p. 361.

A. D. 968.

This princess was daughter of Theodoric, a powerful Saxon count. Her parents, being sensible that piety is the only true greatness, placed her very young in the monastery of Erford, of which her grandmother Maud, who had renounced the world in her widowhood, was then abbess. Here our saint acquired an extraordinary relish for prayer and spiritual reading; and learned to work at her needle, and to employ all the precious moments of life in something serious and worthy the great end of her creation. She remained in that house an accomplished model of all virtues, till her parents married her to Henry, son of Otho, duke of Saxony, in 913. Her husband, surnamed the Fowler, from his fondness for the diversion of hawking, then much in vogue, became duke of Saxony by the death of his father, in 916; and in 919, upon the death of Conrad, was chosen king of Germany. He was a pious and victorious prince, and very tender of his subjects.

His solicitude in easing their taxes, made them ready to serve their country in his wars at their own charges, though he generously recompensed their zeal after his expeditions, which were always attended with success. Whilst he by his arms checked the insolence of the Hungarians and Danes, and enlarged his dominions by adding to them Bavaria, Maud gained domestic victories over her spiritual enemies, more worthy of a Christian, and far greater in the eyes of heaven. She nourished the precious seeds of devotion and humility in her heart by assiduous prayer and meditation; and, not content with the time which the day afforded for these exercises, employed part of the night the same way. The nearer the view was which she took of worldly vanities, the more clearly she discovered their emptiness and dangers, and sighed to see men pursue such bubbles to the loss of their souls; for, under a fair outside, they contain nothing but poison and bitterness.

It was her delight to visit, comfort, and exhort the sick and the afflicted; to serve and instruct the poor, teaching them the advantages of their state from the benedictions and example of Christ; and to afford her charitable succours to prisoners, procuring them their liberty where motives of justice would permit it; or at least easing the weight of their chains by liberal alms; but her chief aim was to make them shake off their sins by sincere repentance. Her husband, edified by her example, concurred with her in every pious undertaking which she projected. After twenty-three years marriage, God was pleased to call the king to himself by an apoplectic fit, in 936. Maud, during his sickness, went to the church to pour forth her soul in prayer for him at the foot of the altar. As soon as she understood, by the tears and cries of the people, that he had expired, she called for a priest that was fasting, to offer the holy sacrifice for his soul; and at the same time cut off the jewels which she wore, and gave them to the priest, as a pledge that she renounced from that moment the pomp of the world. She had three sons; Otho, afterward emperor; Henry, duke of Bavaria, and St. Bruno, archbishop of Cologne. Otho was crowned king of Germany in 937, and emperor at Rome in 962, after his victories over

the Bohemians and Lombards. Maud, in the contest between her two elder sons for the crown which was elective, favoured Henry, who was the younger, a fault she expiated by severe afflictions and penance. These two sons conspired to strip her of her dowry, on the unjust pretence that she had squandered away the revenues of the state on the poor. This persecution was long and cruel, coming from all that was most dear to her in this world. The unnatural princes at length repented of their injustice, were reconciled to her, and restored her all that had been taken from her. She then became more liberal in her alms than ever, and founded many churches, with five monasteries; of which the principal were that of Polden in the dutchy of Brunswick, in which she maintained three thousand monks; and that of Quedlinbourg in the dutchy of Saxony,[a] She buried her husband in this place, and when she had finished the buildings, made it her usual retreat. She applied herself totally to her devotions, and to works of mercy. It was her greatest pleasure to teach the poor and ignorant how to pray, as she had formerly taught her servants. In her last sickness she made her confession to her grandson William, the archbishop of Mentz, who yet died twelve days before her, on his road home. She again made a public confession before the priests and monks of the place, received a second time the last sacraments, and lying on a sack-cloth with ashes on her head, died on the fourteenth of March in 968. Her body remains at Quedlinbourg. Her name is recorded in the Roman Martyrology on this day.

The beginning of true virtue is most ardently to desire it, and to ask it of God with the utmost assiduity and earnestness,[1] preferring it with all the saints to kingdoms and thrones, and considering riches as nothing in comparison of this our only and inestimable treasure. Fervent prayer, holy meditation, and reading pious books, are the principal

[1] Sap. vii. 6.

[a] The abbess of this latter is the first princess of the empire.

means by which it is to be constantly improved, and the interior life of the soul to be strengthened. These are so much the more necessary in the world than in a religious state, as its poison and distractions threaten her continually with the greatest danger. Amidst the pomp, hurry, and amusements of a court, St. Maud gave herself up to holy contemplation with such earnestness, that though she was never wanting to any exterior or social duties, her soul was raised above all perishable goods, dwelt always in heaven, and sighed after that happy moment which was to break the bonds of her slavery, and unite her to God in eternal bliss and perfect love. Is it possible that so many Christians, capable of finding in God their sovereign felicity, should amuse themselves with pleasures which flatter the senses, with reading profane books, and seeking an empty satisfaction in idle visits, vain conversation, news, and sloth, in which they pass those precious hours which they might employ in exercises of devotion, and in the duties and serious employments of their station? What trifles do they suffer to fill their minds and hearts, and to rob them of the greatest of all treasures? Conversation and visits in the world must only be allowed as far as they are social duties, must be regulated by charity and necessity, sanctified by simplicity, prudence, and every virtue, animated by the spirit of God, and seasoned with an holy unction which divine grace gives to those whom it perfectly replenishes and possesses.

SS. ACEPSIMAS, BISHOP, JOSEPH, PRIEST, AND AITHILAHAS, DEACON, MM.

St. Maruthas closes, with the acts of these martyrs, his history of the persecution of king Sapor, which raged without intermission during forty years. The venerable author assures us, that, living in the neighbourhood, he had carefully informed himself of the several circumstances of their combats from those who were eye-witnesses, and ushers in his account with the following address: "Be propitious to me, "O Lord, through the prayers of these martyrs—Being as-"sisted by the divine grace, and strengthened by your pro-

" tection, O ye incomparable men, I presume to draw the " outlines of your heroic virtue and incredible torments. But " the remembrance of your bitter sufferings covers me with " shame, confusion, and tears, for myself and my sins. O! " you who hear this relation, count the days and the hours " of three years and a half, which they spent in prison, and " remember they passed no month without frequent tortures, " no day free from pain, no hour without the threat of im- " mediate death. The festivals and new moons were black " to them by fresh racks, beatings, clubs, chains, hanging by " their limbs, dislocations of their joints, &c." In the thirty-seventh year of this persecution, a fresh edict was published, commanding the governors and magistrates to punish all Christians with racks, scourges, stoning, and every sort of death, laying to their charge the following articles: " They " abolish our doctrine; they teach men to worship one only " God, and forbid them to adore the sun or fire; they use " water for profane washing; they forbid persons to marry, " to be soldiers in the king's armies, or to strike any one; " they permit all sorts of animals to be killed, and they suffer " the dead to be buried; they say that serpents and scorpions " were made, not by the devil, but by God himself."

Acepsimas, bishop of Honita in Assyria, a man above four-score years old, but of a vigorous and strong constitution of body, was apprehended, and conducted in chains to Arbela, before the governor. This judge admired how he could deny the divinity of the sun, which all the East adored. The martyr answered him, expressing his astonishment how men could prefer a creature to the Creator. By the orders of the governor he was laid on the ground with his feet bound, and in that posture barbarously scourged, till his whole body was covered with blood; after which he was thrown into prison.

In the mean time one Joseph, an holy priest of Beth-catuba, and Aithilahas, a deacon of Beth-nudra, famed for eloquence, sanctity, and learning, were brought before the same governor. To his interrogatories, Joseph answered, that he was a Christian, and had always taught the sun to be an inanimate creature. The issue was, that he was stretched flat on the ground, and beaten with thick twigs stripped of

the thorns, by ten executioners who succeeded one another, till his body seemed one continued wound. At the sight of himself in this condition the martyr with joy said: "I re-"turn you the greatest thanks I am able, Christ, the Son of "God, who have granted me this mercy, and washed me "with this second baptism of my blood, to wipe away my-"sins." His courage the persecutors deemed an insult, and redoubled their fury in tearing and bruising his blessed body. After he was loosened, loaded with heavy chains, and cast into the same dungeon with Acepsimas, Aithilahas was called upon. The governor said to him: "Adore the sun, which "is a divinity, eat blood, marry,[a] and obey the king, and "you shall live." The martyr answered: "It is better to "die, in order to live eternally." By the judge's command, his hands were tied under his knees, and his body fastened to a beam: in this posture it was squeezed and pulled many ways, and afterward scourged. His bones were in many places broken or dislocated, and his flesh mangled. At length, not being able to stand, he was carried back to prison on men's shoulders. On the next day, they were all three again brought forth, and stretched on the ground, bound fast with cords, and their legs, thighs, and ribs so squeezed and strained by stakes, that the noise of the bones breaking filled the place with horror. Yet to every solicitation of the judge or officers, their answer was: "We trust in one God, and we will "not obey the king's edicts." Scarce a day passed in which some new torture or other was not invented and tried upon them.

After they had for three years suffered the hardships of imprisonment and daily torments, the king coming into Media, the martyrs were brought before Adarsapor, the chief of all the governors of the East, several other Satrapes and governors sitting with him in the palace. They were carried thither, for they were not able to walk, and they scarce retained the figure of human bodies. The very sight of such spectacles moved all who saw them to compassion, and many

(a) From this, and many other passages, it is clear, that the obligation of perpetual chastity was annexed to Holy Orders in the eastern churches no less than in the western.

to tears. They courageously professed themselves Christians, and declared that they would never abandon their faith. Adarsapor said, he saw by their wounds what they had already suffered, and used both threats and entreaties to work them into a compliance with the law. When they begged him to hasten the execution of his threats, he told them: "Death "frees criminals from pain: but I will render life to you as "grievous as a continued death, that others of your sect "may tremble." Acepsimas said: "In vain do you threaten. "God, in whom we trust, will give us courage and constancy." At this answer, fury flashed in the eyes of Adarsapor, and he swore by the fortune of king Sapor, that if they did not that instant obey the edicts, he would sprinkle their gray hairs with their blood, would destroy their bodies, and would cause their dead remains to be beaten to powder. Acepsimas said: "To you we resign our bodies, and commend to God our "souls. Execute what you threaten. It is what we desire." The tyrant, with rage painted in every feature of his countenance, ordered the venerable old man to be stretched on the ground, and thirty men, fifteen on each side, to pull and haul him by cords tied to his arms, legs, and other limbs, so as to dislocate and almost tear them asunder; and two hangmen in the mean time to scourge his body with so much cruelty as to mangle and tear off the flesh in many parts: under which torment the martyr expired. His body was watched by guards appointed for that purpose, till after three days it was stolen away by the Christians, and buried by the care of a daughter of the king of Armenia, who was at that time a hostage in Media.

Joseph and Aithilahas underwent the same punishment, but came alive out of the hands of the executioners. The latter said to the judge under his torments: "Your tortures "are too mild, increase them as you please." Adarsapor, struck with astonishment at their courage, said: "These "men are greedy of torments as if they were banquets, and "are fond of a kingdom that is invisible." He then caused them to be tormented afresh, so that every part of their bodies was mangled, and their shoulders and arms disjointed. Adarsapor gave an order that if they did not die of their tor-

ments, they should be carried back into their own country, to be there put to death. The two martyrs, being not able to sit, were tied on the backs of beasts, and conveyed with great pain to Arbela, their guards treating them on the way with no more compassion than if they had been stones. Jazdundocta, an illustrious lady of the city Arbela, for a great sum of money, obtained leave of the governor, that they should be brought to her house, to take a short refreshment. She dressed their wounds, bathed their bodies with her tears, and was exceedingly encouraged by their faith and exhortations. The blessed martyrs were soon taken from her house to prison, where they languished six months longer. A new governor at length came into that province, the most savage of men, bringing an edict of the king, commanding, that Christians who were condemned to death, should be stoned by those who professed the same religion. The news of his arrival drove the Christians into the woods and deserts, that they might not be compelled to imbrue their hands in the blood of martyrs. But soldiers there hunted them like wild beasts, and many were taken. The two confessors were presented before this new judge. Joseph was hung up by the toes, and scourged during two hours in the presence of the judge, who hearing him discourse on the resurrection, said: "In that resurrection how do you design to punish me?" The martyr replied: "We are taught meekness, to return "good for evil, and to pray for enemies." "Well," said the judge, "then I shall meet with kindness from your hands "for the evil which you here receive from me." To which the martyr answered: "There will be then no room for "pardon or favour: nor will one be able to help another "I will pray that God may bring you to the knowledge of "himself in this life." The judge said: "Consider these "things in the next world, whither I am going to send you: "at present obey the king." The old man answered: "Death is our desire." The emperor then began to interrogate Aithilahas, and caused him to be hung up by the heels a long time together. He was at length taken down, and to move him to a compliance, he was shewn a certain

Manichæan heretic who had renounced his religion for fear of torments, and was killing ants, which those heretics held unlawful, teaching that insects and beasts have rational souls. The saint, lying on the ground, was scourged till he fell into a swoon, and then was hauled aside like a dog. A certain Magian, out of pity, threw a coat over his wounds to cover his naked body: for which act of compassion he received two hundred lashes till he fainted. Thamsapor arriving at his castle of Beth-Thabala, in that country, the governor caused the martyrs to be carried before him. They were ordered to eat the blood of beasts: which they refused to do. One told them, that if they would eat the juice of red grapes curdled, which the people might think to be blood, this would satisfy the judges. They answered: "God forbid we "should dissemble our faith." We have elsewhere taken notice that the Christians then observed in many places the positive temporary law of the apostles.[1] Thamsapor and the governor, after a short consultation, condemned both to be stoned to death by the Christians. Joseph was executed at Arbela. He was put into the ground up to the neck. The guards had drawn together five hundred Christians to his execution. The noble lady Jazdundocta was brought thither, and earnestly pressed to throw but a feather at the martyr, that she might seem to obey the order of the king. But she resolutely resisted their entreaties and threats, desiring to die with the servant of God. Many, however, having the weakness to comply, a shower of stones fell upon the martyr, which put an end to his life. When he was dead, guards were set to watch his body; but the Christians found means to steal it away on the third night, during a dark tempest. St. Aithilahas suffered in the province of Beth-Nuhadra; the lord of that country, who had been a Christian, by a base apostacy, becoming one of his murderers. St. Maruthas adds, that angels were heard singing at the place of this martyrdom, and many miracles wrought. These martyrs suffered in the year 380, the seventieth and last of the reign of Sapor, and

[1] Acts xv. 29.

the fortieth of his persecution. They are mentioned by Sozomen,[2] and are named in the Roman Martyrology on the twenty-second of April. See their genuine Chaldaic acts by St. Maruthas in Assemani, t. 1. p. 171. Act. Martyr. Orient.

ST. BONIFACE, BISHOP OF ROSS, IN SCOTLAND, C.

An ardent zeal for the salvation of souls brought this servant of God from Italy to North-Britain. Near the mouth of the Tees, where he landed, he built a church under the invocation of St. Peter, another at Tellein, three miles from Alect, and a third at Restennet. This last was served by a famous monastery of regular canons of the order of St. Austin, when religious houses were abolished in Scotland. St. Boniface, by preaching the word of God, reformed the manners of the people in the provinces of Angus, Marris, Buchan, Elgin, Murray, and Ross. Being made bishop in this last county, he filled it with oratories and churches, and by planting the true spirit of Christ in the hearts of many, settled that church in a most flourishing condition. He died about the year 630, and was buried at Rosmark, the capital of the county of Ross. The Breviary of Aberdeen mentions that he founded one hundred and fifty churches and oratories in Scotland, and ascribes many miracles to his intercession after his death. See that Breviary, and King on this day, bishop Lesley, l. 4. hist. Scot. and Hector Boetius, l. 9. hist.

[2] B. 2. ch. 13.

MARCH XV.

ST. ABRAHAM, HERMIT,

AND HIS NIECE ST. MARY, A PENITENT.

From his life written by his friend St. Ephrem, Op. t. 2. p. 1. Ed. nov. Vatic. See other Acts of St. Abraham, given in Latin by Lipoman, 29 Oct. and by Surius, 16 March, mentioned in Greek by Lambecius, Bibl. Vind. t. 8. p. 255. 260. 266. and by Montfaucon, Bibl. Coislin. p. 211. Two other kinds of Greek Acts are found among the MSS. at the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prez at Paris, Bibl. Coisl. ib. See also Jos. Assemani, Bibl. Orient. t. 1. p. 38. and 396. from the Chronicle of Edessa: likewise Kohlius, Introductio in historiam et rem literariam Sclavorum, p. 316. Altonaviæ, A. D. 1729.

About the year 360.

St. Abraham was born at Chidana in Mesopotamia, near Edessa, of wealthy and noble parents, who, after giving him a most virtuous education, were desirous of engaging him in the married state. In compliance with their inclinations, Abraham took to wife a pious and noble virgin: but earnestly desiring to live and die in the state of holy virginity, as soon as the marriage ceremony and feast were over, having made known his resolution to his new bride, he secretly withdrew to a cell two miles from the city Edessa; where his friends found him at prayer after a search of seventeen days. By earnest entreaties he obtained their consent, and after their departure walled up the door of his cell, leaving only a little window, through which he received what was necessary for his subsistence. He spent his whole time in adoring and praising God, and imploring his mercy. He every day wept abundantly. He was possessed of no other earthly goods but a cloak and a piece of sack-cloth which he wore, and a little vessel out of which he both eat and drank. For fifty years he was never wearied with his austere penance and

holy exercises, and seemed to draw from them every day fresh vigour. Ten years after he had left the world, by the demise of his parents, he inherited their great estates, but commissioned a virtuous friend to distribute the revenues in almsdeeds. Many resorted to him for spiritual advice, whom he exceedingly comforted and edified by his holy discourses.

A large country town in the diocess of Edessa remained till that time addicted to idolatry, and its inhabitants had loaded with injuries and outrages all the holy monks and others who had attempted to preach the gospel to them. The bishop at length cast his eye on Abraham, ordained him priest, though much against his will, and sent him to preach the faith to those obstinate infidels. He wept all the way as he went, and with great earnestness repeated this prayer: "Most "merciful God, look down on my weakness: assist me with "thy grace, that thy name may be glorified. Despise not "the works of thine own hands." At the sight of the town, reeking with the impious rites of idolatry, he redoubled the torrents of his tears: but found the citizens resolutely determined not to hear him speak. Nevertheless, he continued to pray and weep among them without intermission, and though he was often beaten and ill-treated, and thrice banished by them, he always returned with the same zeal. After three years the infidels were overcome by his meekness and patience, and being touched by an extraordinary grace, all demanded baptism. He staid one year longer with them to instruct them in the faith; and on their being supplied with priests and other ministers, he went back to his cell.

His brother dying soon after his return thither, left an only daughter, called Mary, whom the saint undertook to train up in a religious life. For this purpose he placed her in a cell near his own, where, by the help of his instructions, she became eminent for her piety and penance. At the end of twenty years she was unhappily seduced by a wolf in sheep's clothing, a wicked monk, who resorted often to the place under colour of receiving advice from her uncle. Hereupon falling into despair, she went to a distant town where she gave herself up to the most criminal disorders. The saint ceased not for two years to weep and pray for her conversion,

Being then informed where she dwelt, he dressed himself like a citizen of that town, and going to the inn where she lived in the pursuit of her evil courses, desired her company with him at supper. When he saw her alone, he took off his cap which disguised him, and with many tears said to her: "Daughter Mary, don't you know me? What is now become "of your angelical habit, of your tears and watchings in the "divine praises?" &c.

Seeing her struck and filled with horror and confusion, he tenderly encouraged her and comforted her, saying, that he would take her sins upon himself if she would faithfully follow his advice, and that his friend Ephrem also prayed and wept for her. She with many tears returned him her most hearty thanks, and promised to obey in all things his injunctions. He set her on his horse, and led the beast himself on foot. In this manner he conducted her back to his desert, and shut her up in a cell behind his own. There she spent the remaining fifteen years of her life in continual tears, and the most perfect practices of penance and other virtues. Almighty God was pleased within three years after her conversion, to favour her with the gift of working miracles by her prayers. And as soon as she was dead, "her countenance appeared to "us," says St. Ephrem, "so shining, that we understood that "choirs of angels had attended at her passage out of this life "into a better." St. Abraham died five years before her: at the news of whose sickness almost the whole city and country flocked to receive his benediction. When he had expired, every one strove to procure for themselves some part of his clothes, and St. Ephrem, who was an eye-witness, relates, that many sick were cured by the touch of these relicks. SS. Abraham and Mary were both dead when St. Ephrem wrote, who died himself in 378.[a] St. Abraham is named in the Latin, Greek, and Coptic calendars; and also St. Mary in those of the Greeks.

St. Abraham converted his desert into a paradise, because

[a] Bollandus, Papebroke and Pagi pretend that St. Abraham the hermit lived near the Hellespont, and long after St. Ephrem: but are clearly confuted by Jos. Assemani, Bibl. Orient. t. 1. and Comm. in Calend. Univ. t. 5. p. 324. ad 29 Oct. The chronicle of Edessa assures us that he was a native of Chidana, and was living in the year of the Greeks 667, of Christ 356.

he found in it his God, whose presence makes Heaven. He wanted not the company of men, who enjoyed that of God and his angels; nor could he ever be at a loss for employment, to whom both the days and nights were too short for heavenly contemplation. Whilst his body was employed in penitential manual labour, his mind and heart were sweetly taken up in God, who was to him All in All, and the centre of all his desires and affections. His watchings were but an uninterrupted sacrifice of divine love, and by the ardour of his desire, and the disposition of his soul and its virtual tendency to God, his sleep itself was a continuation of his union with God, and exercise of loving him. He could truly say, with the spouse, *I sleep, but my heart watcheth.* Thus Christians, who are placed in distracting stations, may also do, if they accustom themselves to converse interiorly with God in purity of heart, and in all their actions and desires have only his will in view. Such a life is a kind of imitation of the Seraphims, to whom to live and to love are one and the same thing. "The angels," says St. Gregory the "Great, always carry their Heaven about with them where-"soever they are sent, because they never depart from God, "or cease to behold him; ever dwelling in the bosom of his "immensity, living and moving in him, and exercising their "ministry in the sanctuary of his divinity." This is the happiness of every Christian who makes a desert, by interior solitude, in his own heart.

ST. ZACHARY, POPE, C.

He succeeded Gregory III. in 741, and was a man of singular meekness and goodness; and so far from any thought of revenge, that he heaped benefits on those who had persecuted him before his promotion to the pontificate. He loved the clergy and people of Rome to that degree, that he hazarded his life for them on occasion of the troubles which Italy fell into by the rebellion of the dukes of Spoletto and Benevento against king Luitprand. Out of respect to his sanctity and dignity, that king restored to the church of Rome all the places which belonged to it. Ameria, Horta, Narni, Ossimo, An-

cona, and the whole territory of Sabina, and sent back the captives without ransom. The Lombards were moved to tears at the devotion with which they heard him perform the divine service. By a journey to Pavia, he obtained also of Luitprand, though with some difficulty, peace for the territory of Ravenna, and the restitution of the places which he had taken from the exarchate. The zeal and prudence of this holy pope appeared in many wholesome regulations, which he had made to reform or settle the discipline and peace of several churches. St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, wrote to him against a certain priest, named Virgilius; that he laboured to sow the seeds of discord between him and Odilo, duke of Bavaria, and taught, besides other errors, that there were other men under the earth, another sun and moon, and another world.[a] Pope Zachary answered, that if he taught such an error, he ought to be deposed. This cannot be understood as a condemnation of the doctrine of Antipodes, or the spherical figure of the earth, as some writers have imagined by mistake. The error here spoken of is that of certain heretics, who maintained, that there was another race of men, who did not descend from Adam, and were not redeemed by Christ. Nor did Zachary pronounce any sentence in the case: for in the same letter he ordered that Virgilius should be sent to Rome, that his doctrine might be examined. It seems that he cleared himself: for we find this same Virgilius soon after made bishop of Saltzburgh.[b] Certain Venetian merchants having bought at Rome many slaves

[a] Quod alius mundus et alii homines sub terra sint, seu alius sol et luna. (Ep. 10. t. 6. Conc. p. 15, 21. et Bibl. Patr. inter Epist. S. Bonif.) To imagine different worlds of men upon earth, some not descending from Adam, nor redeemed by Christ, is contrary to the holy scriptures, and therefore justly condemned as erroneous, as Baronius observes (ad. ann. 784. n. 12.

[b] Many ancient philosophers thought the earth flat, not spherical, and believed no Antipodes. Several fathers adopted this vulgar error in philosophy, in which faith no way interferes, as St. Austin, (l. 16. de Civ. Dei, c. 9.) Bede, (l. 4. de Principiis Philos.) and Cosmas the Egyptian, surnamed Indicopleustes. It is, however, a mistake to imagine, with Montfaucon, in his preface to this last-mentioned author, that this was the general opinion of christian philosophers down to the fifteenth century. For the learned Philophonus demonstrated before the modern discoveries, (de Mundi Creat. l. 3. c. 13.) that the greater part of the fathers teach the world to be a sphere, as St. Basil, the two SS. Gregories, of Nazianzum and of Nyssa, St. Athanasius, &c. And several amongst them mention Antipodes, as St. Hilary, (in Ps. 2. n. 32.) Origen, (l. 2. de princip. c. 3.) St. Clement, pope, &c.

to sell to the Moors in Africa, St. Zachary forbade such an iniquitous traffic, and, paying the merchants their price, gave the slaves their liberty. He adorned Rome with sacred buildings, and with great foundations in favour of the poor and pilgrims, and gave every year a considerable sum to furnish oil for the lamps in St. Peter's church. He died in 752, in the month of March, and is honoured in the Roman Martyrology on this day. See his letters and the Pontificals, t. 6. Conc. also Fleury, l. 42. t. 9. p. 349.

MARCH XVI.

ST. JULIAN, OF CILICIA, M.

From the panegyric of St. Chrysostom, t. 2. p. 671. Ed. Ben. Tillem. t. 5. p. 573.

This saint was a Cilician, of a senatorian family in Anazarbus, and a minister of the gospel. In the persecution of Dioclesian he fell into the hands of a judge, who, by his brutal behaviour, resembled more a wild beast than a man. The president, seeing his constancy proof against the sharpest torments, hoped to overcome him by the long continuance of his martyrdom. He caused him to be brought before his tribunal every day; sometimes he caressed him, at other times threatened him with a thousand tortures. For a whole year together he caused him to be dragged as a malefactor through all the towns of Cilicia, imagining that this shame and confusion might vanquish him: but it served only to increase the martyr's glory, and gave him an opportunity of encouraging in the faith all the Christians of Cilicia by his example and exhortations. He suffered every kind of torture. The bloody executioners had torn his flesh, furrowed his sides, laid his bones bare, and exposed his very bowels to view. Scourges, fire, and the sword were employed various ways to torment

him with the utmost cruelty. The judge saw that to torment him longer was labouring to shake a rock, and was forced at length to own himself conquered by condemning him to death: in which, however, he studied to surpass his former cruelty. He was then at Ægea, a town on the sea-coast; and he caused the martyr to be sewed up in a sack with scorpions, serpents and vipers, and so thrown into the sea. This was the Roman punishment for parricides, the worst of malefactors, yet seldom executed on them, Eusebius mentions, that St. Ulpian of Tyre suffered a like martyrdom, being thrown into the sea in a leather sack together with a dog and an aspick. The sea gave back the body of our holy martyr, which the faithful conveyed to Alexandria of Cilicia, and afterward to Antioch, where St. Chrysostom pronounced his panegyric before his shrine. He eloquently sets forth how much these sacred relicks were honoured; and affirms, that no devil could stand their presence, and that men by them found a remedy for their bodily distempers, and the cure of the evils of the soul.

The martyrs lost with joy their worldly honours, dignity, estates, friends, liberty, and lives, rather than forfeit for one moment, their fidelity to God. They courageously bade defiance to pleasures and torments, to prosperity and adversity, to life and death, saying, with the apostle: *Who shall separate us from the love of Jesus Christ?* Crowns, sceptres, worldly riches and pleasures, you have no charms which shall ever tempt me to depart in the least tittle from the allegiance which I owe to God. Alarming fears of the most dreadful evils, prisons, racks, fire and death, in every shape of cruelty, you shall never shake my constancy. Nothing shall ever separate me from the love of Christ. This must be the sincere disposition of every Christian. Lying protestations of fidelity to God cost us nothing: but he sounds the heart. Is our constancy such as to bear evidence to our sincerity, that rather than to fail in the least duty to God we are ready to resist to blood? and that we are always upon our guard to keep our ears shut to the voices of those sirens which never cease to lay snares to our senses?

ST. FINIAN, SURNAMED LOBHAR, OR THE LEPER,

Was son of Conail, descended from Kian, the son of Alild, king of Munster. He was a disciple of St. Brendan, and flourished about the middle of the sixth century. He imitated the patience of Job under a loathsome and tedious distemper, from which his surname was given him. The famous abbey of Innis-fallen, which stood in an island of that name, in the great and beautiful lake of Lough-Lane in the county of Kerry, was founded by our saint.[a] A second, called from him Ardfinnan, he built in Tipperary; and a third at Cluain-more Madoc, in Leinster, where he was buried. He died on the second of February; but, says Colgan, his festival is kept on the sixteenth of March at all the above-mentioned places. Sir James Ware speaks of two MSS. histories of his life. See also Usher, (Antiq. c. 17.) Colgan 17 Martii. Mr. Smith, in his natural and civil history of the county of Kerry, in 1755, p. 127.

[a] In the monastery of Innis-fallen was formerly kept a chronicle called the Annals of Innis-fallen. They contain a sketch of universal history from the creation to the year 430. From that time the annalist amply enough prosecutes the affairs of Ireland down to the year 1215, when he wrote. They were continued by another hand to 1320. They are often quoted by Bishop Usher and Sir James Ware. An imperfect transcript is kept among the MSS. of the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Bishop Nicholson, in his Irish historical library, informs us, that the late duke of Chandos had a complete copy of them.

MARCH XVII.

SAINT PATRICK, B. C.

APOSTLE OF IRELAND.

The Irish have many lives of their great apostle, whereof the two principal are, that compiled by Jocelin, a Cistercian monk, in the twelfth century, who quotes four lives written by disciples of the saint; and that by Probus, who, according to Bollandus, lived in the seventh century. But in both are intermixed several injudicious popular reports. We, with Tillemont, chiefly confine ourselves to the saint's own writings, his Confession, and his letter to Corotic, which that judicious critic doubts not to be genuine. The style in both is the same; he is expressed in them to be the author; the Confession is quoted by all the authors of his life, and the letter was written before the conversion of the Franks under king Clovis, in 496. See Tillemont, t. 16. p. 455. and Britannia Sancta.

A. D. 464.

If the virtue of children reflects an honour on their parents, much more justly is the name of St. Patrick rendered illustrious by the innumerable lights of sanctity with which the church of Ireland, planted by his labours in the most remote corner of the then known world, shone during many ages; and by the colonies of saints with which it peopled many foreign countries; for, under God, its inhabitants derived from their glorious apostle the streams of that eminent sanctity, by which they were long conspicuous to the whole world. St. Patrick was born in the decline of the fourth century;[a] and as he informs us in his Confession, in a village called Bonaven Taberniæ, which seems to be the town of Killpatrick, on the mouth of the river Cluyd, in Scotland, between Dunbriton and Glasgow. He calls himself both a Briton

[a] According to Usher and Tillemont, in 372. The former places his death in 493: but Tillemont, about the year 455. Nennius, published by Mr. Gale, says he died fifty-seven years before the birth of St. Columba, consequently in 464.

and a Roman, or of a mixed extraction, and says his father was of a good family named Calphurnius, and a denizen of a neighbouring city of the Romans, who not long after abandoned Britain, in 409. Some writers call his mother Conchessa, and say she was niece to St. Martin of Tours. At fifteen years of age he committed a fault, which appears not to have been a great crime, yet was to him a subject of tears during the remainder of his life. He says, that when he was sixteen, he lived still ignorant of God, meaning of the devout knowledge and fervent love of God, for he was always a Christian: he never ceased to bewail this neglect, and wept when he remembered that he had been one moment of his life insensible of the divine love. In his sixteenth year he was carried into captivity by certain barbarians, together with many of his father's vassals and slaves, taken upon his estate. They took him into Ireland, where he was obliged to keep cattle on the mountains, and in the forests, in hunger and nakedness, amidst snows, rain, and ice. Whilst he lived in this suffering condition, God had pity on his soul, and quickened him to a sense of his duty by the impulse of a strong interior grace. The young man had recourse to him with his whole heart in fervent prayer and fasting; and from that time faith and the love of God acquired continually new strength in his tender soul. He prayed often in the day, and also many times in the night, breaking off his sleep to return to the divine praises. His afflictions were to him a source of heavenly benedictions, because he carried his cross with Christ, that is, with patience, resignation, and holy joy. Saint Patrick, after six months spent in slavery under the same master, was admonished by God in a dream to return to his own country, and informed that a ship was then ready to sail thither. He repaired immediately to the sea-coast, though at a great distance, and found the vessel; but could not obtain his passage, probably for want of money. Thus new trials ever await the servants of God. The saint returned towards his hut, praying as he went, but the sailors, though pagans, called him back, and took him on board. After three days sail they made land, probably in the north of Scotland: but wandered twenty-seven days through deserts, and were a long

while distressed for want of provisions, finding nothing to eat. Patrick had often entertained the company on the infinite power of God: they therefore asked him, why he did not pray for relief. Animated by a strong faith, he assured them that if they would address themselves with their whole hearts to the true God, he would hear and succour them. They did so, and on the same day met with a herd of swine. From that time provisions never failed them till on the twenty-seventh day they came into a country that was cultivated and inhabited. During their distress, Patrick refused to touch meats which had been offered to idols. One day a great stone from a rock happened to fall upon him and had like to have crushed him to death, whilst he was laid down to take a little rest. But he invoked Elias, and was delivered from the danger. Some years afterward he was again led captive; but recovered his liberty after two months. When he was at home with his parents, God manifested to him, by divers visions, that he destined him to the great work of the conversion of Ireland. He thought he saw all the children of that country from the wombs of their mothers stretching out their hands, and piteously crying to him for relief.[b]

Some think he had travelled into Gaul before he undertook his mission, and we find that, whilst he preached in Ireland, he had a great desire to visit his brethren in Gaul, and to see those whom he calls the saints of God, having been formerly acquainted with them. The authors of his life say, that after his second captivity, he travelled into Gaul and Italy, and had seen St. Martin, St. Germanus of Auxerre, and

[b] St. Prosper, in his chronicle, assures us, that pope Celestine ordained St. Palladius bishop of the Scots in 431, and by him converted their country to the faith; this apostle seems to have preached to this nation first in Ireland, and afterward in Scotland. Though Palladius be styled by St. Prosper and Bede their first bishop, yet the light of the faith had diffused its rays from Britain into Ireland before that time, as several monuments produced by Usher demonstrate. But the general conversion of the inhabitants of this island was reserved for St. Patrick.

The Scots are distinguished from the native Irish in the works of St. Patrick, and in other ancient monuments. As to their original, the most probable conjecture seems to be, that they were a foreign warlike nation, who made a settlement in Ireland before the arrival of St. Patrick. We find them mentioned there in the fourth century. Several colonies of them passed not long after into Scotland. But the inhabitants of Ireland were promiscuously called Scots or Irish for many ages.

pope Celestine, and that he received his mission, and the apostolical benediction from this pope, who died in 432. But it seems, from his Confession, that he was ordained deacon, priest, and bishop, for his mission in his own country. It is certain that he spent many years in preparing himself for those sacred functions. Great opposition was made against his episcopal consecration and mission both by his own relations and by the clergy. These made him great offers in order to detain him among them, and endeavoured to affright him by exaggerating the dangers to which he exposed himself amidst the enemies of the Romans and Britons, who did not know God. Some objected, with the same view, the fault which he had committed thirty years before as an obstacle to his ordination. All these temptations threw the saint into great perplexities, and had like to have made him abandon the work of God. But the Lord, whose will he consulted by earnest prayer, supported him, and comforted him by a vision; so that he persevered in his resolution. He forsook his family, sold, as he says, his birth-right and dignity, to serve strangers, and consecrated his soul to God to carry his name to the end of the earth. He was determined to suffer all things for the accomplishment of his holy design, to receive in the same spirit both prosperity and adversity, and to return thanks to God equally for the one as for the other, desiring only that his name might be glorified, and his divine will accomplished to his own honour. In this disposition he passed into Ireland, to preach the gospel, where the worship of idols still generally reigned. He devoted himself entirely for the salvation of these barbarians, to be regarded as a stranger, to be contemned as the last of men, to suffer from the infidels imprisonment and all kinds of persecution, and to give his life with joy, if God should deem him worthy to shed his blood in his cause. He travelled over the whole island, penetrating into the remotest corners, without fearing any dangers, and often visited each province. Such was the fruit of his preachings and sufferings, that he consecrated to God, by baptism, an infinite number of people, and laboured effectually that they might be perfected in his service by the practice of virtue. He ordained every where clergymen,

induced women to live in holy widowhood and continence, consecrated virgins to Christ, and instituted monks. Great numbers embraced these states of perfection with extreme ardour. Many desired to confer earthly riches on him who had communicated to them the goods of Heaven; but he made it a capital duty to decline all self-interest, and whatever might dishonour his ministry. He took nothing from the many thousands whom he baptized, and often gave back the little presents which some laid on the altar, choosing rather to mortify the fervent than to scandalize the weak or the infidels. On the contrary, he gave freely of his own, both to Pagans and Christians, distributed large alms to the poor in the provinces where he passed, made presents to the kings; judging that necessary for the progress of the gospel, and maintained and educated many children whom he trained up to serve at the altar. He always gave till he had no more to bestow, and rejoiced to see himself poor, with Jesus Christ, knowing poverty and afflictions to be more profitable to him than riches and pleasures. The happy success of his labours cost him many persecutions.

A certain prince named Corotick, a Christian, though in name only, disturbed the peace of his flock. He seems to have reigned in some part of Wales, after the Britons had been abandoned by the Romans. This tyrant, as the saint calls him, having made a descent into Ireland, plundered the country where St. Patrick had been just conferring the holy chrism, that is confirmation, on a great number of Neophytes, who were yet in their white garments after baptism. Corotick, without paying any regard to justice, or to the holy sacrament, massacred many, and carried away others, whom he sold to the infidel Picts or Scots. This probably happened at Easter or Whitsuntide. The next day the saint sent the barbarian a letter by a holy priest whom he had brought up from his infancy, entreating him to restore the christian captives, and at least part of the booty he had taken, that the poor people might not perish for want; but was only answered by railleries, as if the Irish could not be the same Christians with the Britons: which arrogance and pride sunk those barbarous conquerors beneath the dignity of men, whilst

by it they were puffed up above others in their own hearts. The saint, therefore, to prevent the scandal which such a flagrant enormity gave to his new converts, writ with his own hand a public circular letter. In it he styles himself a sinner and an ignorant man; for such is the sincere humility of the saints (most of all when they are obliged to exercise any acts of authority) contrary to the pompous titles which the world affects. He declares, nevertheless, that he is established bishop of Ireland, and pronounces Corotick and the other parricides and accomplices separated from him and from Jesus Christ, whose place he holds, forbidding any to eat with them, or to receive their alms, till they should have satisfied God by the tears of sincere penance, and restored the servants of Jesus Christ to their liberty. This letter expresses his most tender love for his flock, and his grief for those who had been slain, yet mingled with joy, because they reign with the prophets, apostles, and martyrs. Jocelin assures us, that Corotick was overtaken by the divine vengeance. St. Patrick wrote his Confession as a testimony of his mission, when he was old.[c] It is solid, full of good sense and piety, expresses an extraordinary humility and a great desire of martyrdom, and is wrote with spirit. The author was perfectly versed in the holy scriptures. He confesses every where his own faults with a sincere humility, and extols the great mercies of God towards him in this world, who had exalted him, though the most undeserving of men: yet, to preserve him in humility, afforded him the advantage of meeting with extreme contempt from others, that is, from the heathens. He confesses, for his humiliation, that, among other temptations, he felt a great desire to see again his own country, and to visit the saints of his acquaintance in Gaul: but durst not abandon his people; and says, that the Holy Ghost had declared to him, that to do it would be criminal. He tells us, that a little before he wrote this, he himself and all his companions had been plundered and laid in irons for his having baptized the

(c) The style is not polished; but the Latin edition is perhaps only a translation: or his captivities might have prevented his progress in polite learning being equal to that which he made in the more sublime and more necessary studies.

son of a certain king against the will of his father: but were released after fourteen days. He lived in the daily expectation of such accidents, and of martyrdom; but feared nothing, having his hope as a firm anchor fixed in Heaven, and reposing himself with an entire confidence in the arms of the Almighty. He says, that he had lately baptized a very beautiful young lady of quality, who some days after came to tell him, that she had been admonished by an angel to consecrate her virginity to Jesus Christ, that she might render herself the more acceptable to God. He gave God thanks, and she made her vows with extraordinary fervour six days before he wrote this letter.

St. Patrick held several councils to settle the discipline of the church which he had planted. The first, the acts of which are extant under his name in the editions of the councils, is certainly genuine. Its canons regulate several points of discipline, especially relating to penance.[d] St. Bernard and the tradition of the country testify, that St. Patrick fixed his metropolitan see at Armagh. He established some other bishops, as appears by his Council and other monuments. He not only converted the whole country by his preaching and wonderful miracles, but also cultivated this vineyard with so fruitful a benediction and increase from heaven, as to render Ireland a most flourishing garden in the church of God, and a country of saints. And those nations, which had for many ages esteemed all others barbarians, did not blush to receive, from the utmost extremity of the uncivilized or barbarous world, their most renowned teachers and guides in the greatest of all sciences, that of the saints.

Many particulars are related of the labours of St. Patrick, which we pass over. In the first year of his mission he

[d] A second council, extant in the same collection, ought rather to be ascribed to a nephew of this saint. Other Irish canons, published in the ninth tome of D'Achery's Spicilege, and more by Martenne, (Anecd. tome 4. part 2.) though they bear the name of St. Patrick, are judged to have been framed by some of his successors. See Wilkins, Conc. Britan. & Hibern. t. 1. p. 3.

The treatise Of the twelve Abuses, published among the works of St. Austin and St. Cyprian, is attributed to St. Patrick, in a collection of ecclesiastical ordinances made in Ireland, in the eighth age, by Arbedoc, and in other ancient monuments. The style is elegant: but it may be a translation from an Irish original. Sir James Ware published the works of St. Patrick at London, in 1658, in octavo.

attempted to preach Christ in the general assembly of the kings and states of all Ireland, held yearly at Taraghe, or Themoria, in East-Meath, the residence of the chief king, styled the monarch of the whole island, and the principal seat of the Druids or priests, and their paganish rites. The son of Neill, the chief monarch, declared himself against the preacher: however, he converted several, and on his road to that place, the father of St. Benen, or Benignus, his immediate successor in the see of Armagh. He afterward converted and baptized the kings of Dublin and Munster, and the seven sons of the king of Connaught, with the greatest part of their subjects, and before his death almost the whole island. He founded a monastery at Armagh; another called Domnach-Padraig, or Patrick's church; also a third, named Sabhal-Padraig, and filled the country with churches and schools of piety and learning; the reputation of which, for the three succeeding centuries, drew many foreigners into Ireland.[e] Nennius, abbot of Bangor, in 620, in his history of the Britons,[1] published by the learned Thomas Gale, says, that St. Patrick took that name only when he was ordained bishop, being before called Maun: that he continued his missions over all the provinces of Ireland, during forty years; that he restored sight to many blind, health to the sick, and raised nine dead persons to life.[f] He died and was buried at Down in Ulster.

[1] C. 55, 56, 57, 58, 61.

[e] It seems demonstrated that the St. Patrick who flourished among the hermits of Glastenbury, and was there buried, was distinct from our saint, and somewhat older.

[f] The popular tradition attributes the exemption of their country from venomous creatures to the benediction of St. Patrick, given by his staff, called the Staff of Jesus, which was kept with great veneration in Dublin, as is mentioned in the year 1360, by Ralph Higden in his Polychronicon, published by Mr. Gale, and by others. The isle of Malta is said to derive a like privilege from St. Paul, who was there bit by a viper.

St. Patrick's purgatory is a cave in an island in the lake Dearg, in the county of Donnegall, near the borders of Fermanagh. Bollandus shews the falsehood of many things related concerning it. Upon complaint of certain superstitious and false notions of the vulgar, in 1497, it was stopped up by an order of the pope. See Bollandus, Tillemont, p. 787, Alemand in his monastic history of Ireland, and Thiers, Hist. des Superst. t. 4. ed. Nov. It was soon after opened again by the inhabitants; but only according to the original institution, as Bollandus takes notice, as a penitential retirement for those who voluntarily chose it, probably in imitation of St. Patrick, or other saints, who had there dedicated themselves to a penitential state. The penitents usually spend there several days

His body was found there in a church of his name in 1185, and translated to another part of the same church. His festival is marked on the seventeenth of March, in the Martyrology of Bede, &c.

The apostles of nations were all interior men, endowed with a sublime spirit of prayer. The salvation of souls being a supernatural end, the instruments ought to bear a proportion to it, and preaching proceed from a grace which is supernatural. To undertake this holy function, without a competent stock of sacred learning, and without the necessary precautions of human prudence and industry, would be to tempt God. But sanctity of life, and the union of the heart with God, are a qualification far more essential than science, eloquence, and human talents. Many almost kill themselves with studying to compose elegant sermons which flatter the ear, yet reap very little fruit. Their hearers applaud their parts, but very few are converted. Most preachers, now-a-days, have learning, but are not sufficiently grounded in true sanctity, and a spirit of devotion. Interior humility, purity of heart, recollection, and the spirit and the assiduous practice of holy prayer, are the principal preparation for the ministry of the word, and the true means of acquiring the science of the saints. A short devout meditation and fervent prayer, which kindle a fire in the affections, furnish more thoughts proper to move the hearts of the hearers, and inspire them with sentiments of true virtue, than many years employed barely in reading and study. St. Patrick, and other apostolic men, were dead to themselves and the world, and animated with the spirit of perfect charity and humility, by which they were prepared by God to be such powerful instruments of his grace, as, by the miraculous change of so many hearts, to plant in entire barbarous nations not only the faith, but also the spirit of Christ. Preachers, who have not attained to a disengagement and purity of heart, suffer the petty interests of self-love secretly to mingle themselves in their zeal and charity, and have reason to suspect, that they inflict deeper

living on bread and water, lying on rushes or furze, and praying much, with daily stations which they perform barefoot.

wounds in their own souls than they are aware, and produce not in others the good which they imagine.

MANY MARTYRS AT ALEXANDRIA, IN 392.

Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, obtained a rescript of the emperor Theodosius, to convert an old deserted temple of Bacchus into a christian church. In clearing this place, in the subterraneous secret caverns, called by the Greeks Adyta, and held by the Pagans as sacred, were found infamous and ridiculous figures, which Theophilus caused to be exposed in public, to shew the extravagant superstitions of the idolaters. The heathens in tumults raised a sedition, killed many Christians in the streets, and then retired into the great temple of Serapis as their fortress. In sallies they seized many Christians, and upon their refusing to sacrifice to Serapis, put them to death by cruel torments, crucifying them, breaking their legs, and throwing them into the sinks and jakes of the temple with the blood of their victims. The principal ancient divinities of Egypt were Apis, called also Osiris, once a great king and benefactor of that country, who was worshipped under the figure of a bull, and the wife of Apis named Isis, who is said to have taught or improved agriculture.[a]

The temple of Serapis, in Alexandria, was most stately and rich, built on an eminence raised by art, in a beautiful spacious square, with an ascent of one hundred steps, surrounded with lofty edifices for the priests and officers. The temple was built of marble, supported with precious pillars, and the walls on the inside were covered with plates of brass, silver, and gold. The idol was of so enormous a size, that its arms being extended, they reached to the opposite walls of the temple: its figure was that of a venerable old man with a beard, and long hair; but with it was joined a monstrous figure of an animal with three heads: the biggest in the middle was that of a lion; that of a dog fawning came out on

[a] Those mistake the truth, who confound Serapis with Osiris, or who imagine him to have been the patriarch Joseph. Serapis was a modern divinity, raised by the Ptolemies. See Calmet, Banier on Mythology, &c.

the right side, and that of a ravenous wolf on the left: a serpent was represented twining round these three animals, and laying its head on the right-hand of Serapis: on the idol's head was placed a bushel, an emblem of the fertility of the earth. The statue was made of precious stones, wood, and all sorts of metal together; its colour was at first blue, but the steams or moisture of the place had turned it black. A hole in the temple was contrived to admit the sun's rays upon its mouth, at the hour when the idol of the sun was brought in to visit it. Many other artifices were employed to deceive the people into an opinion of its miracles. No idol was so much respected in Egypt; and on its account Alexandria was looked upon as a holy city.

The emperor being informed of the sedition, called those happy who had received by it the crown of martyrdom; and not to dishonour their triumph, he pardoned their murderers, but sent an order to demolish the temples in Egypt. When this letter was read at Alexandria, the Pagans raised hideous cries; many left the city, and all withdrew from the temple of Serapis. The idol was cut down by pieces, and thrown into a fire. The heathens were persuaded that if any one should touch it, the heavens would fall, and the world return into the state of its primitive chaos. Seeing no such judgment threaten, they began themselves to deride a senseless trunk reduced to ashes. The standard of the Nile's increase was kept in this temple, but it was on this occasion removed into the cathedral. The idolaters expected the river would swell no more: but finding the succeeding years very fertile, they condemned the vanity of their superstitions, and embraced the faith. Two churches were built on the place where this temple stood, and its metal was converted to the use of churches. The busts of Serapis on the walls, doors, and windows of the houses were broken and taken away. The temples all over Egypt were demolished, during the two following years. In pulling down those of Alexandria, the cruel mysteries of Mithra were discovered, and in the secret Adyta were found the heads of many infants cut off, cruelly mangled, and superstitiously painted. The artifices of the priests of the idols were likewise detected: there were hollow idols

of wood and brass, placed against a wall, with subterraneous passages, through which the priests entered the hollow trunks of the idols, and gave answers as oracles, as is related by Theodoret,[1] and Rufinus.[2] Where the idols were cast down, figures of the cross were set up in their places. These martyrs suffered in the year 392. See Theodoret, Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, Fleury, b. 19. Tillemont in the history of Theodosius, art. 52—55.

ST. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

He was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, but a faithful disciple of Jesus. It was no small proof of his great piety, that, though he had riches and honours to lose, he feared not the malice of men, but at a time when the apostles trembled, boldly declared himself a follower of Jesus who was crucified; and with the greatest devotion embalmed and buried his sacred body. This saint was the patron of Glastenbury, where a church and hermitage, very famous in the times of the ancient Britons,[a] were built by the first apostles of this island: among whom some moderns have placed St. Joseph himself, and Aristobulus.

ST. GERTRUDE, V. ABBESS OF NIVELLE.

She was daughter of Pepin of Landen, mayor of the palace to the French kings of Austrasia, and younger sister to Saint Begga. She was born in 626. Her father's virtuous palace was the sanctuary of her innocence, and the school of her tender piety. Being pressed to marry, she declared in presence of king Dagobert: "I have chosen for my spouse him from "whose eternal beauty all creatures derive their glory, whose "riches are immense, and whom the angels adore." The king admired her gravity and wisdom in so tender an age, and would not suffer her to be any more disturbed on that account. Her mother, the blessed Itta, employed St. Amand to direct

[1] B. 5. c. 22.—[2] B. 7. c. 25.

[a] See Matthew of Westminster, and John of Glastenbury, in their histories of that famous abbey, published by Hearne: also Tanner's Notitia Monastica.

the building of a great nunnery at Nivelle, in Brabant, for Gertrude. It is now a double chapter of canons and canonesses. The virgin was appointed abbess when only twenty years of age. Her mother, the blessed Itta, lived five years under her conduct, and died in the twelfth year of her widowhood, in 652. She is honoured in the Belgic Martyrologies on the eighth of May. Gertrude governed her monastery with a prudence, zeal, and virtue that astonished the most advanced in years and experience. She loved extreme holy poverty in her person and house; but enriched the poor. By assiduous prayer and holy meditation she obtained wonderful lights from heaven. At thirty years of age, she resigned her abbey to her niece Wilfetrude, and spent the three years which she survived, in preparing her soul for her passage to eternity, which happened on the seventeenth of March, in 659. Her festival is a holyday at Louvain, and throughout the dutchy of Brabant. It is mentioned in the true Martyrology of Bede, &c. See her life written by one who was present at her funeral, and an eye-witness to the miracles, of which there is an account in Mabillon, and the Acts of the Saints. See also Rivet, Hist. Liter. t. 4. p. 39. An anonymous author much enlarged this life in the tenth century, but the additions are of small authority. This work was printed by Ryckel, abbot of St. Gertrude's, at Louvain, in 1632. See Hist. Liter. t. 6. p. 292. Also La Vie de S. Gertrude, abbesse de Nivelle, par Gul. Descœuvres, in 12mo. at Paris, Ann. 1612. Consult likewise Dom Bouquet, Recueil des hist. de France, t. 2. p. 603, &c.

MARCH XVIII.

SAINT ALEXANDER, B. M.

BISHOP OF JERUSALEM.

From St. Jerom, Catal. c. 62. Euseb. Hist. b. 6. c. 8. 10. 14. 20. See Tillemont, t. 3. p. 415. and Le Quien, Oriens Christ. t. 3. p. 150.

A. D. 251.

St. Alexander studied with Origen in the great christian school of Alexandria, under St. Pantenus and his successor, St. Clement. He was chosen bishop of a certain city in Cappadocia. In the persecution of Severus, in 204, he made a glorious confession of his faith, and though he did not then seal it with his blood, he suffered several years imprisonment, till the beginning of the reign of Caracalla, in 211, when he wrote to congratulate the church of Antioch upon the election of St. Asclepias, a glorious confessor of Christ, to that patriarchate; the news of which, he says, had softened and made light the irons with which he was loaded. He sent that letter by the priest St. Clement of Alexandria, a man of great virtue, whom God had sent into Cappadocia to instruct and govern his people, during his confinement.

St. Alexander being enlarged soon after, in 212, was commanded by a revelation from God, to go to Jerusalem to visit the holy places.[1] The night before his arrival, St. Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, and some other saints of that church, had a revelation, in which they heard a distinct voice commanding them to go out of the city and take for bishop him whom God sent them. St. Narcissus was then very old and decrepit: he and his flock seized Alexander, and by the

[1] Eus. b. 6. c. 14. S. Hieron in Catal.

consent of all the bishops of Palestine, assembled in a council, made him his coadjutor and joint bishop of Jerusalem. SS. Narcissus and Alexander still governed this church together, when the latter wrote thus to the Antinoits: "I salute "you in the name of Narcissus, who held here the place of "bishop before me, and, being above one hundred and sixteen "years old, is now united with me by prayer. He conjures "you with me to live in inviolable peace and union." Saint Alexander collected at Jerusalem a great library, consisting of the writings and letters of eminent men, which subsisted when Eusebius wrote. He excelled all other holy prelates and apostolic men in mildness and in the sweetness of his discourses, as Origen testifies. St. Alexander was seized by the persecutors under Decius, confessed Christ a second time, and died in chains at Cæsarea, about the end of the year 251, as Eusebius testifies. He is styled a martyr by St. Epiphanius, St. Jerom, and the Martyrologies, and honoured in the Roman Martyrology on the eighteenth of March; by the Greeks on the sixteenth of May and the twenty-second of December.

A pastor must first acquire a solid degree of interior virtue, before he can safely undertake to labour in procuring the salvation of others, or employ himself in exterior functions of the ministry. He must have mortified the deeds of the flesh by compunction, and the habitual practice of self-denial; and the fruits of the spirit must daily more and more perfectly subdue his passions. These fruits of the spirit are charity and humility, which stifle all the motions of anger, envy, and pride: holy joy, which banishes carnal sadness, sloth, and all disrelish in spiritual exercises; peace, which crushes the seeds of discord, and the love and relish of heavenly things, which extinguish the love of earthly goods and sensual pleasures. One whose soul is slothful, sensual, and earthly, deserves not to bear the name of a Christian, much less of a minister of the gospel. There never was a saint who did not carry his cross, and walk in the steps of Christ crucified. St. Alexander would have thought a day lost in which he did not add something to the sacrifice of his penance in

order to continue and complete it. By this he prepared himself to die a victim of fidelity and charity. This is the continued martyrdom by which every true Christian earnestly labours to render himself every day more and more pleasing to God, making his body a pure holocaust to him by mortification, and his soul, by the fervour of his charity and compunction.

SAINT CYRIL, CONFESSOR,

ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM.

From the church historians, and his works collected by Dom Touttée in his excellent edition of them at Paris, in 1720.

A. D. 386.

Cyril was born at or near the city of Jerusalem, about the year 315. So perfectly was he versed in the holy scriptures, that many of his discourses, and some of these pronounced extempore, are only passages of the sacred writings connected and interwoven with each other. He had read diligently both the fathers and the pagan philosophers. Maximus, bishop of Jerusalem, ordained him priest about the year 345, and soon after appointed him his preacher to the people, likewise his catechist to instruct and prepare the catechumens for baptism; thus committing to his care the two principal functions of his own pastoral charge. St. Cyril mentions his sermons to the faithful every Sunday.[1] Catechumens ordinarily remained two years in the course of instruction and prayer, and were not admitted to baptism till they had given proof of their morals and conduct, as well as of their constancy in the faith.[2] This office St. Cyril performed for several years; but we have only the course of his catechetical sermons for the year 348, or 347. Perhaps the

[1] Cat. 5. 10. 14.—[2] See Fleury, Mœurs des Chretiens, p. 42.

others were never committed to writing. He succeeded Maximus in the see of Jerusalem about the end of the year 350.

The beginning of his episcopacy was remarkable for a prodigy by which God was pleased to honour the instrument of our redemption. It is related by Socrates,[3] Philostorgius,[4] the chronicle of Alexandria, &c. St. Cyril, an eye-witness, wrote immediately to the emperor Constantius, an exact account of this miraculous phænomenon: and his letter is quoted as a voucher for it by Sozomen,[5] Theophanes,[6] Eutychius,[7] John of Nice,[8] Glycas, and others. Dr. Cave has inserted it at length in his life of St. Cyril.[9] The relation he there gives of the miracle is as follows: "On the nones (or "seventh) of May about the third hour (or nine in the morn-"ing) a vast luminous body, in the form of a cross, appeared "in the heavens, just over the holy Golgotha, reaching as far "as the holy mount of Olivet, (that is, almost two English "miles in length) seen not by one or two persons, but clearly "and evidently by the whole city. This was not, as may be "thought, a momentary transient phænomenon: for it con-"tinued several hours together visible to our eyes, and bright-"er than the sun; the light of which would have eclipsed it, "had not this been stronger. The whole city, struck with a "reverential fear, tempered with joy, ran immediately to the "church, young and old, Christians and heathens, citizens "and strangers, all with one voice giving praise to our Lord "Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, the worker of miracles; "finding by experience the truth of the christian doctrine, "to which the heavens bear witness." He concludes his letter with wishes that the emperor may always glorify the holy and consubstantial Trinity.[a] Philostorgius and the Alexandrian chronicle affirm, that this cross of light was en-

[3] B. 2. ch. 28.—[4] B. 3. ch. 26.—[5] B. 5. ch. 5.—[6] Ad an. 353.—[7] Annal. p. 475.—[8] Auctuar. Combefis, t. 2. p. 382.—[9] T. 2. p. 344.

[a] Τὴν ὁμοούσιον Τριάδα. This is an argument of his firm adherence to the Nicene faith, and that by the praises which he bestows on an Arian emperor in this piece, he meant not to flatter him in his heterodox sentiments; they being only compliments of course in an address to an eastern emperor, and his own sovereign.

circled with a large rainbow.[b] The Greek church commemorates this miracle on the seventh of May.

Some time after this memorable event, a difference happened between our saint and Acacius, archbishop of Cæsarea, first a warm Semi-Arian, afterward a thorough Arian. It began on the subject of metropolitical jurisdiction, which Acacius unjustly claimed over the church of Jerusalem; and what widened the breach between them was their difference of sentiments with regard to the consubstantiality of the Son, which St. Cyril had always most zealously asserted.[c] This was sufficient to render him odious in the eyes of Acacius, who in a council of Arian bishops, convened by him, declared St. Cyril deposed for not appearing, after two years warning, to answer to the crimes alleged against him. One of them

[b] Certain moderns imagine that the luminous crosses which appeared in the air in the reigns of Constantine and Constantius were merely natural solar Halos; and that under Julian, which appeared in the night, a lunar halo, or circle of colours, usually red, round those celestial bodies. But in opposition to this hypothesis we must observe, that those natural phænomena do not ordinarily appear in the figure of a cross, but of a ring or circle, as both experience and the natural cause shew. We ought also to take notice, that this prodigy appeared thrice in the same century, and always on extraordinary occasions, in which many circumstances rendered a miraculous manifestation of the divine power highly credible. Moreover, how will these secretaries and confidents of the intrigues of nature, as Mr. Warburton styles them, account for the inscription, *In this conquer*, which was formed in bright letters round the cross, which appeared in the air to Constantine and his whole army, as that emperor himself affirmed upon oath, and as Eusebius assures us from his testimony, and that of other eye-witnesses (l. 1. de vit. Constant. c. 28. olim 22.) Fabricius very absurdly pretends that γραφὴν may here signify an emblem, not an inscription. Mr. Jortin, after taking much pains on this subject, is obliged to confess (vol. 3. p. 6.) that, "After all, it seems more "natural to interpret γραφὴν λέγουσαν of a "writing than of a picture. It is an ugly "circumstance, (says this author,) and I "wish we could fairly get rid of it." Those who can explain the scripture account of the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea by a natural strong wind, and an extraordinary ebbing of the waters, can find no knot too hard for them. To deny a supernatural interposition they can swallow contradictions, and build hypotheses far more wonderful than the greatest miracles.

[c] Sozomen indeed says, (b. 4. c. 24.) that Acacius fought for Arianism, Cyril for Semi-Arianism: but this is altogether a mistake. For Acacius himself was at that time a Semi-Arian, and in 341, in the council of Antioch, affirmed Christ to be like, though not equal to his Father. It was only in 358, that he closed in with Eudoxius, and the other rigid Arians. And as to St. Cyril, it is also clear frrom the facts above-mentioned, and from his writings, that he always professed the catholic faith with regard to the article of the Consubstantiality of the Son of God. This is demonstrated by Dom Touttée, in his life of St. Cyril, and by his colleague Dom Maran, in his dissertation on the Semi-Arians, printed at Paris, in 1721, to vindicate this father against a certain author in the memoirs of Trevoux, an. 1721.

was that he had lavished away the goods of the church, and had applied its sacred ornaments to profane uses. The ground of the accusation was, that, in time of a great famine at Jerusalem, he had sold some of the church plate, and precious stuffs to relieve the wants of the poor. St. Cyril, not looking upon the members of the council as qualified judges, appealed to higher powers,[10] but yielding to violence withdrew to Antioch, and thence removed to Tarsus, where he was honourably entertained by the bishop Sylvanus, and had in great respect, notwithstanding the sentence of Acacius and his council against him. Here living in communion with Sylvanus, Eustathius of Sebaste, Basil of Ancyra, and others, who soon after appeared at the head of the Semi-Arian faction, this gave rise to the calumny that St. Cyril himself had espoused it. But nothing could be more falsely alleged against him, he having always maintained the catholic faith. He had accordingly, in 349, together with his predecessor Maximus, received the decrees of the council of Sardica, and consequently those of Nice. And we have already seen, in his letter to Constantius, that he made an undaunted profession of the Consubstantial Trinity. To which we may add, that in the council of Constantinople, in 381, he joined with the other bishops in condemning the Semi-Arians and Macedonians. And the orthodox bishops assembled in the same city, in 382, writing to pope Damasus and to the western bishops, gave a most ample testimony to his faith, declaring, "That the most reverend and beloved of God, Cyril, bishop "of Jerusalem, had been canonically elected by the bishops "of the province, and had suffered many persecutions for the "faith."[11] Upon the death of Constantius, in 361, Julian the apostate, partly out of aversion to his uncle, and partly in hopes to see the Christian sects and the orthodox more at variance, suffered all the banished bishops to return to their churches. Thus did God make use of the malice of his enemy to restore St. Cyril to his see. He shortly after made him an eye-witness to the miraculous manifestation of his power, by which he covered his blaspheming enemies with

[10] Sozom. b. 4. c. 24.—[11] Apud Theod. Hist. b. 5. c. 9.

confusion. The following most authentic history of that remarkable event is gathered from the original records, and vindicated against the exceptions of certain skeptics by Tillemont,[12] and by our most learned Mr. Warburton, in his Julian.

In vain had the most furious tyrants exerted the utmost cruelty, and bent the whole power which the empire of the world put into their hands, to extirpate, if it had been possible, the christian name. The faith increased under axes, and the blood of martyrs was a fruitful seed, which multiplied the church over all nations. The experience how weak and ineffectual a means brute force was to this purpose, moved the emperor Julian, the most implacable, the most crafty, and the most dangerous instrument which the devil ever employed in that design, to shift his ground, and change his artillery and manner of assault. He affected a shew of great moderation, and in words disclaimed open persecution; but he sought by every foul and indirect means to undermine the faith, and sap the foundations of the christian religion. For this purpose he had recourse to every base art of falsehood and dissimulation, in which he was the most complete master. He had played off the round of his machines to no purpose, and seemed reduced to this last expedient of the pacific kind, the discrediting the christian religion by bringing the scandal of imposture upon its divine author. This he attempted to do by a project of rebuilding the Jewish temple, which, if he could have compassed, it would have sufficiently answered his wicked design; Christ and the prophet Daniel having in express terms foretold not only its destruction, which was effected by the Romans under Titus, but its final ruin and desolation.

The Jewish religion was a temporary dispensation, intended by its divine author, God himself, to prefigure one more complete and perfect, and prepare men to embrace it. It not only essentially required bloody sacrifices, but enjoined a fixed and certain place for them to be performed in; this was the temple at Jerusalem. Hence the final destruction of

[12] Tillem. t. 7. p. 409.

this temple was the abolition of the sacrifices, and annihilated the whole system of this religious institution. Whence Saint Chrysostom,[13] shews that the destruction of Jerusalem is to be ascribed, not to the power of the Romans, for God had often delivered it from no less dangers; but to a special providence, which was pleased to put it out of the power of human perversity to delay or respite the extinction of those ceremonial observances. "As a physician," says that father, "by breaking the cup, prevents his patient from indulging "his appetite in a noxious draught; so God withheld the Jews "from their sacrifices by destroying the whole city itself, and "making the place inaccessible to all of them." St. Gregory Nazianzen, Socrates, Theodoret, and other christian writers, are unanimous in what they say of Julian's motive, ascribing to him the intention already mentioned, of falsifying the scripture prophecies, those of Daniel and Christ, which his actions sufficiently evidence. His historian, indeed, says, that he undertook this work out of a desire of rendering the glory of his reign immortal by so great an achievement:[14] but this was only an after-thought or secondary motive; and Sozomen in particular assures us that not only Julian, but that the idolaters who assisted in it, pushed it forward upon that very motive, and for the sake thereof suspended their aversion to the Jewish nation. Julian himself wrote a letter to the body or community of the Jews, extant among his works,[15] mentioned by Sozomen,[16] and translated by Dr. Cave, in his life of St. Cyril. In it he declares them free from all exactions and taxes, and orders Julus or Illus, (probably Hillel) their most reverend patriarch, to abolish the apostoli, or gatherers of the said taxes; begs their prayers, (such was his hypocrisy) and promises, after his Persian expedition, when their temple should be rebuilt, to make Jerusalem his residence, and to offer up his joint prayers together with them.

After this he assembled the chief among the Jews, and asked them why they offered no bloody sacrifices, since they were prescribed by their law. They replied, that they could not offer any but in the temple, which then lay in ruins.

[13] Hom. 6. adv. Judæ. t. 1. p. 646. ed Ben.—[14] Amm. Marcell. l. 3. c. 1.—[15] Ep. 25. p. 152.—[16] Soz. l. 5. c. 22.

Whereupon he commanded them to repair to Jerusalem, rebuild their temple, and re-establish their ancient worship, promising them his concurrence towards carrying on the work. The Jews received the warrant with inexpressible joy, and were so elated with it, that, flocking from all parts to Jerusalem, they began insolently to scorn and triumph over the Christians, threatening to make them feel as fatal effects of their severity, as they themselves had heretofore from the Roman powers.[d] The news was no sooner spread abroad, than contributions came in from all hands. The Jewish women stript themselves of their most costly ornaments to contribute towards the expense of the building. The emperor also, who was no less impatient to see it finished, in order to encourage them in the undertaking, told them he had found in their mysterious sacred books that this was the time in which they were to return to their country, and that their temple and legal observances were to be restored.[17] He gave orders to his treasurers to furnish money and every thing necessary for the building, which would require immense sums: he drew together the most able workmen from all quarters, and appointed for overseers persons of the highest rank, placing at their head his intimate friend Alypius, who had formerly been Pro-prefect of Britain; charging him to make them labour in this great work without ceasing, and to spare no expense. All things were in readiness, workmen were assembled from all quarters; stone, brick, timber, and other materials, in immense quantities, were laid in. The Jews of both sexes and of all degrees bore a share in the labour; the very women helping to dig the ground and carry out the rubbish in their aprons and skirts of their gowns. It is even said that the Jews appointed some pickaxes, spades, and baskets to be made of silver for the honour of the work. But the good bishop St. Cyril, lately returned from exile, beheld all these mighty preparations without any concern, relying on the infallible truth of the scripture prophecies: as, that the deso-

[17] Naz. Or. 4. adv. Julian.

[d] It was about this time that the Jews demolished the great church of Alexandria, two more at Damascus, and others elsewhere.

lation of the Jewish temple should last till the end;[18] and that one stone should not be left on another;[19] and being full of the spirit of God, he foretold, with the greatest confidence, that the Jews, so far from being able to rebuild their ruined temple, would be the instruments whereby that prophecy of Christ would be still more fully accomplished than it had been hitherto, and that they would not be able to put one stone upon another;[20] and the event justified the prediction.

Till then the foundations and some ruins of the walls of the temple subsisted, as appears from St. Cyril:[21] and Eusebius says,[22] the inhabitants still carried away the stones for their private buildings. These ruins the Jews first demolished with their own hands, thus concurring to the accomplishment of our Saviour's prediction. Then they began to dig the new foundation, in which work many thousands were employed. But what they had thrown up in the day was, by repeated earthquakes, the night following cast back again into the trench, "And when Alypius the next day earnestly "pressed on the work, with the assistance of the governor "of the province, there issued, says Ammianus, such horrible "balls of fire out of the earth near the foundations,[23] which "rendered the place, from time to time, inaccessible to the "scorched and blasted workmen. And the victorious element "continuing in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent "as it were to drive them to a distance, Alypius thought pro-"per to give over the enterprise."[e] This is also recorded by the christian authors, who, besides the earthquake and fiery eruption, mention storms, tempests, and whirlwinds, lightning, crosses impressed on the bodies and garments of the assistants, and a flaming cross in the heavens, surrounded with a luminous circle. The order whereof seems to have been as follows. This judgment of the Almighty was ushered in by storms

[18] Dan. ix. 27.—[19] Matt. xxiv. 2.—[20] Rufin. Hist. l. 10. c. 37.—[21] Catech. 15. n. 15.—[22] Dem. Evang. l. 8. p. 406.—[23] Out of the very foundations themselves, according to St. Chrysostom, Sozomen, and Theodoret.

[e] Hocque modo elemento destinatiùs repellente. Amm. Marcel. l. xxiii. c. 1. A very emphatical expression in the mouth of a Pagan. He seems by it to ascribe sense to the element, by which he discovers the finger of God visibly defeating the obstinacy of the undertaking, and a renewal of the eruption so often, till it overcame the rashness of the most obstinate.

and whirlwinds, by which prodigious heaps of lime and sand and other loose materials were carried away.[24] After these followed lightning, the usual consequence of collision of clouds in tempests. Its effects were, first the destroying the more solid materials, and melting down the iron instruments;[25] and secondly, the impressing shining crosses on the bodies and garments of the assistants without distinction, in which there was something that in art and elegance exceeded all painting or embroidery; which when the infidels perceived, they endeavoured, but in vain, to wash them out.[f] In the third place came the earthquake, which cast out the stones of the old foundations, and shook the earth into the trench or cavity dug for the new; besides overthrowing the adjoining buildings and porticos wherein were lodged great numbers of Jews designed for the work, who were all either crushed to death, or at least maimed or wounded. The number of the killed or hurt was increased by the fiery eruption in the fourth place, attended both with storms and tempests above, and with an earthquake below.[26] From this eruption, many fled to a neighbouring church for shelter, but could not obtain entrance; whether on account of its being closed by a secret invisible hand, as the fathers state the case, or at least by a special providence, through the entrance into the oratory being choked up by a frighted crowd, all pressing to be foremost. "This, however," says St. Gregory Nazianzen,[27] "is invariably affirmed and believed by all, that as they strove "to force their way in by violence, the *Fire*, which burst from "the foundations of the temple, met and stopt them, and "one part it burnt and destroyed, and another it desperately "maimed, leaving them a living monument of God's com-"mination and wrath against sinners." This eruption was frequently renewed till it overcame the rashness of the most obdurate, to use the words of Socrates; for it continued to

[24] Theod. hist. l. 3. c. 20.—[25] Soc. lib. 3. c. 20.—[26] St. Greg. Naz. Or. 9. [27] Or. 4. adv. Julian.

(f) St. Greg. Naz. Or. 4. adv. Julian. Theodoret indeed says that these crosses were shaded with a dark colour: but this without any real contradiction to St. Gregory's relation of the matter, because, like the phosphorus, they were of a darkish hue by day, and lucid by night.

be repeated as often as the projectors ventured to renew their attempt, till it had fairly tired them out. Lastly, on the same evening, there appeared over Jerusalem a lucid cross, shining very bright, as large as that in the reign of Constantine, encompassed with a circle of light. "And what could be so "proper to close this tremendous scene, or to celebrate this "decisive victory, as the *Cross* triumphant, encircled with "the *Heroic* symbol of conquest?"

This miraculous event, with all its circumstances, is related by the writers of that age; by St. Gregory Nazianzen in the year immediately following it; by St. Chrysostom, in several parts of his works, who says that it happened not twenty years before, appeals to eye-witnesses still living and young, and to the present condition of those foundations, "of which," says he, "we are all witnesses;" by St. Ambrose in his fortieth epistle, written in 388; Rufinus, who had long lived upon the spot; Theodoret, who lived in the neighbourhood in Syria; Philostorgius the Arian; Sozomen, who says many were alive when he wrote who had it from eye-witnesses, and mentions the visible marks still subsisting; Socrates, &c. The testimony of the heathens corroborate this evidence; as that of Ammianus Marcellinus above quoted, a nobleman of the first rank, who then lived in the court of Julian at Antioch and in an office of distinction, and who probably wrote his account from the letter of Alypius to his master at the time when the miracle happened. Libanius, another pagan friend, and admirer of Julian, both in the History of his own life, and in his Funeral oration on Julian's death, mentions these earthquakes in Palestine, but with a shyness which discovers the disgrace of his hero and superstition. Julian himself speaks of this event in the same covert manner. Socrates testifies, that, at the sight of the miracles, the Jews at first cried out that Christ is God; yet returned home as hardened as ever. St. Gregory Nazianzen says, that many Gentiles were converted upon it, and went over to the church. Theodoret and Sozomen say many were converted; but as to the Jews, they evidently mean a sudden flash of conviction, not a real and lasting conversion. The incredulous blinded themselves by various pretences: but the evidence

of the miracle leaves no room for the least cavil or suspicion. The christian writers of that age are unanimous in relating it with its complicated circumstances, yet with a diversity which shews their agreement, though perfect, could not have been concerted. The same is confirmed by the testimony of the most obstinate adversaries. They, who, when the temple at Daphne was consumed about the same time, by lightning, pretended that it was set on fire by Christians, were not able to suspect any possibility of contrivance in this case: nor could the event have been natural. Every such suspicion is removed by the conformity of the event with the prophecies: the importance of the occasion, the extreme eagerness of Jews and Gentiles in the enterprise, the attention of the whole empire fixed on it, and the circumstances of the fact. The eruption, contrary to its usual nature, was confined to one small spot; it obstinately broke out by fits, and ceased with the project, and this in such a manner, that Ammianus himself ascribes it to an intelligent cause. The phænomena of the cross in the air, and on the garments, were admirably fitted, as moral emblems, to proclaim the triumph of Christ over Julian, who had taken the cross out of the military ensigns, which Constantine had put there to be a lasting memorial of that cross which he had seen in the air that presaged his victories. The same was again erected in the heavens to confound the vanity of its impotent persecutor. The earthquake was undoubtedly miraculous; and though its effects were mostly such as might naturally follow, they were directed by a special supernatural providence, as the burning of Sodom by fire from Heaven. Whence Mr. Warburton concludes his dissertation on this subject with the following corollary. "New light continually springing up from each circumstance "as it passes in review, by such time as the whole event is "considered, this illustrious miracle comes out in one full "blaze of evidence."(g) Even Jewish Rabbins, who do not copy from christian writers, relate this event in the same

(g) This learned author demonstrates, lib. 2 ch. 4. that the exceptions of Mr. Basnage are founded on glaring mistakes and misrepresentations of his authorities.

manner with the fathers from their own traditions and records.[28] This great event happened in the beginning of the year 363. St. Chrysostom admires the wonderful conduct of divine providence in this prodigy, and observes, that had not the Jews set about to rebuild their temple, they might have pretended they could have done it: therefore did God permit them thrice to attempt it; once under Adrian, when they brought a greater desolation upon themselves; a second time under Constantine the Great, who dispersed them, cut off their ears, and branded their bodies with the marks of rebellion. He then relates this third attempt, "in our "own time," as he says, "not above twenty years ago, in "which God himself visibly baffled their endeavours, to shew "that no human power could reverse his decree; and this "at a time when our religion was oppressed, lay under the "axes, and had not the liberty even to speak; that impu-"dence itself might not have the least shadow of pretence."

St. Cyril adored the divine power in this miracle, of which he had ocular demonstration. Orosius says that Julian had destined him to slaughter after his Persian expedition, but the death of the tyrant prevented his martyrdom. He was again driven from his see by the Arian emperor, Valens, in 367, but recovered it in 378, when Gratian, mounting the throne, commanded the churches to be restored to those who were in communion with pope Damasus. He found his flock miserably divided by heresies and schisms under the late wolves to whom they had fallen a prey: but he continued his labours and tears among them. In 381, he assisted at the general council of Constantinople, in which he condemned the Semi-Arians and Macedonians, whose heresy he had always opposed, though he had sometimes joined their prelates against the Arians before their separation from the church, as we have seen above; and as St. Hilary, St. Meletius, and many others had done. He had governed his church eight years in peace from the death of Valens, when, in 386, he passed to a glorious immortality, in the seventieth year of his age. He is honoured by the Greeks and Latins on this day, which was that of his death.

[28] See Warburton, p. 88.

Appendix on the Writings of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

St. Maximus, bishop of Jerusalem, having appointed Saint Cyril both his preacher and his catechist, our saint diligently acquitted himself of both these functions, the most important of the episcopal charge. St. Cyril mentions his sermons which he made to the people every Sunday. (Cat. 5. 10. 14.) One of these is extant in the new edition of his works. It is a moral discourse against sin, as the source of all our miseries, drawn from the gospel upon the sick man healed at the Probatic pond. (John v.) He preached every year a course of catechetical sermons for the instruction of the catechumens, to prepare them for baptism and the holy communion. Only those which he preached in 347, or rather in 348, seem to have been committed to writing. These consist of eighteen to the Competentes, or Illuminati, that is, catechumens before baptism ; and of five mystogostic catechetical discourses, so called either because they were addressed to the catechumens immediately after they were initiated in the holy mysteries of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist, or because these sacraments are fully explained in them, which were never expounded to those who were not initiated out of respect, and for fear of giving occasion to their profanation by the blasphemies of infidels. In the first eighteen St. Cyril explains the doctrine of the church concerning the pardon of sin, prayer, and all the articles of the apostles' creed. The style is clear, suitable to an exposition of doctrine such as is here given, and the work is one of the most important of christian antiquity. The Latin translation of Grodecius, canon of Warmia in Poland, printed first in 1563, though often corrected, was very inaccurate ; and the Greek editions very incorrect and imperfect, before that given of Thomas Milles at Oxford, in 1703, which is very valuable, though the author in part of his notes, where he endeavours to maintain the principles of the protestant church, is very inconsistent. Dom Touttée a Maurist monk, who died in 1718, prepared an excellent and complete edition of the works of St. Cyril ; which was published by Dom Maran, in 1720, in one volume in folio. The journalists of Trevoux, in their memoirs for December, in 1721, criticised some of the notes concerning the Semi-Arians, and the temporary neutrality of St. Cyril. Dom Maran answered them by a learned and curious dissertation Sur le Semi-Ariens, printed by Vincent, in 1722.

Three French Calvinists, Aubertin, Rivet, (Critici sacri, l. 3. c. 8, 9, 10, & 11.) and the apostate Casimir Oudin, (De Script. Eccl. t. 1. p. 459.) deny these catecheses, at least the mystagogics, to be the work of St. Cyril. Ouden to his usual inaccuracy adds many affected blunders, and shews a dread of his unanswerable authority in favour of many articles which he was unwilling to allow, was his chief motive for raising such a contest about the author ; though if this was not St. Cyril, these critics must confess from six hundred passages in the discourses, that they were delivered at Jerusalem, about the middle of the fourth century. Other Protestants, especially the English, are more sincere, and prove them this father's most undoubted work, as Doctor Cave, in St. Cyril's life, Thomas Milles, in his preface and notes to his edition of St. Cyril, Whittaker, Vossius, Bull, &c. They were preached at Jerusalem, seventy years after Manes broached his heresy, whom some then alive had seen, (cat. 6.) which agrees only to the year 347. They are mentioned by St. Jerom, in the same age, (Catal. c. 112.) quoted by Theodoret (Dial. Inconfusus, p. 106.) and innumerable other fathers in every age downwards. As for the five mystagogics, they are inseparable from the rest, and as undoubted. The author promises them in his eighteenth, and

mentions his first eighteen in the first mystagogic. (n. 9.) They are quoted by Eustrasius, (under Justinian) by Anastius the Sinaite, Nico, the monk, and other ancients produced by Dom Touttée. (diss. 2. p. cv.)

In his first catechetic instructions, he commands the catechumens not to divulge any part of our mysteries to any infidel as unworthy, and exhorts them to the dispositions and preparation for holy baptism, *viz.* to a pure intention, assiduity in prayer, and at church, devoutly receiving the exorcisms, fasting, sincere repentance, confessing their sins, whatever they had committed. (catch. 1. n. 5.) In the fourth he gives a summary of the christian faith, and reckons up the canonical books of scripture, in which he omits the Apocalypse, and some of the deutero-canonical books, though he quotes these in other places as God's word. In the following discourses he explains very distinctly and clearly every article of our Creed: He teaches Christ's descent into the subterraneous dungeons (εἰς τα καταχθονια) to deliver the ancient just. (cat. 4. n. 11. p. 57.) The porters of hell stood astonished to behold their conqueror, and fled: the prophets and saints, with Moses, Abraham, David, &c. met him, now redeemed by him. (cat. 14. n. 19. p. 214.) He extols exceedingly the state of virginity as equal to that of the angels. (cat. 4 n. 24. cat. 12. n. 33, 34.) He says it will in the day of judgment in the list of good works, carry off the first crowns. (cat. 15. n. 23.) He compares it to gold, and marriage, which is yet good and honourable, to silver; but prescribes times of continency to married persons for prayer (cat. 4. n. 26.) He calls Lent the greatest time of fasting and penance, but says, "Thou dost "not abstain from wine and flesh as bad "in themselves, as the Manichees, for "so thou wilt have no reward: but thou "retrenchest them, good indeed in themselves, for better spiritual recompenses "which are promised," (cat. 4. n. 27.) He mentions the fasts and watchings of superposition, *i. e.* of holy week before Easter, as most austere. (cat. 18.) He expresses on all occasions the tenderest devotion to the holy cross of Christ, and a great confidence in it, with which he endeavours also to inspire others. "Let "us not be ashamed of the cross of "Christ," says he: "sign it openly on "thy forehead, that the devils, seeing "the royal standard, may fly far trembling; make this sign when thou eatest "or drinkest, sittest, liest, risest, speakest, walkest, in a word, in every action "ἐν παντι πραγματι." (cat. 4. p. 58.) And again, "when thou art going to dispute "against an infidel, make with thy hand "the sign of the cross, and thy adversary will be struck dumb; be not "ashamed to confess the cross. The angels glory in it, saying, Whom do you "seek? Jesus the crucified, Mat. xxviii. "6. You could have said, O Angel, My "Lord: but the cross is his crown." (cat. 13. n. 22. p. 194.) St. Porphyry of Gaza, instructed by St. Cyril's successor, John, following this rule, by beginning a disputation with a famous Manichean woman, struck her miraculously dumb. St. Cyril, in his thirteenth catechesis, thus addresses his catechumen, (n. 36. p. 200.) "Be careful to form with your "finger on your forehead boldly, the "sign of the cross for a signet and standard, and that before every thing; "whilst we eat our bread, or drink our "cups, in coming in and going out, before sleep, and in rising, in walking, "and in standing still." He testifies, in his tenth catechesis, (n. 19.) that the holy wood of the cross kept at Jerusalem, had in the few years since its invention by St. Helena, already filled the whole world, being carried every where by those who, full of devotion, cut off little chips. (p. 146.) We learn from Rufin, (hist. b. 1. c. 10.) that the holy cross was covered by St. Helena with a silver case; and from S. Paulinus, (Ep. 31. n. 6.) that it was kept in an inner treasury in the church into which the passage lay through a portico or gallery, as appears from the Spiritual Meadow. (c. 105.) A lamp burned before the cross, by the oil whereof St. Sabas and St. Cyriacus wrought many miracles, as we read in their lives. A priest was appointed by the bishop to be the guardian of this sacred treasury, which honour was conferred on St. Porphyry of Gaza, soon after St. Cyril's death; and then the case of the cross was of gold. St. Paulinus says, it was

exposed to the public veneration of the people once a year at Easter, which some think to have been on Good Friday. St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, (Or. 1.) besides other days, in his time, says it was on Easter Monday. At extraordinary times the bishop gave leave for it to be shewn to pilgrims to be venerated, and for them to cut off small chips, by which, miraculously, the cross never diminished, as St. Paulinus wrote seventy years after its invention. The devotion of St. Cyril to the holy cross, was doubtless more inflamed by the sacred place in which he made all his sermons, which was the church built by St. Helena and Constantine, sometimes called of the Holy Cross, which was kept in it; sometimes of the Resurrection, because it contained in it the sepulchre, out of which Christ arose from death. It is curiously described as it stood, before it was destroyed by the Saracens, in 1011, by Dom Touttée, in a particular dissertation in the end of St. Cyril's works. (p. 423.) It was since rebuilt, but not exactly in the same place.

St. Cyril inculcates also an honour due to the relicks of saints, which he proves (cat. 17. n. 30, 31.) from the Holy Ghost performing miracles by the handkerchiefs of St. Paul, how much more by the saints' bodies? This he shews (cat. 18. n. 16. p. 293.) by the man raised to life by touching the dead body of Eliseus. (4. Reg. xiii. 21.) He gives the blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God, θεοτόκος. (cat. 10. n. 19. p. 146.) He is very clear in explaining the Eternity and Consubstantiality of God the Son, (cat. 4, 10, 11, 15.) which would alone justify him from all suspicion of Semi-Arianism. He is no less explicit against the Macedonians, on the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. On that article: *I believe in the Holy Ghost*, "Believe of "him," says he, "the same as of the Fa- "ther and of the Son," &c. (cat. 4. n. 16. p. 59, 60.) On the article of the holy catholic church, he observes that the very name of Catholic distinguishes it from all heresies, which labour in vain to usurp it; this always remains proper to the spouse of Christ, as we see, if a stranger asks in any city, Where is the catholic church. (cat. 18. n. 26.) That it is catholic or universal, because spread over the whole world from one end to the other; and because universally and without failing or error, καθολικῶς καὶ ἀνελλειπῶς, it teaches all truths of things visible and invisible, (ib. n. 23. p. 296.) which he proves from Mat. xvi. 18. *The gates of hell shall never prevail against it.* 1. Tim. iii. 15. *It is the pillar and ground of truth.* Malach. i. 11. *From the rising of the sun to the setting, my name is glorified.* He is very earnest in admonishing, that no book is to be received as divine, but by the authority of the church, and by tradition from the apostles, and the ancient bishops, the rulers of the church. (cat. 4. n. 23, 35, 36.) By the same channel of the tradition of the church, he teaches the sign of the cross, the honouring of that holy wood of our Saviour's sepulchre, and of saints relicks, exorcisms, and their virtue, insufflations, oil sanctified by exorcisms, (cat. 20.) holy chrism, (cat. 21.) blessing the baptismal water, (cat. 3.) prayers, and sacrifices for the dead, (cat. 23.) the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary, (cat. 12.) &c. He made these eighteen catecheses to the catechumens during Lent: the five following he spoke to them after they were baptised during Easter week, to instruct them perfectly in the mysteries of the three sacraments they had received together, Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist, which it was thought a profanation to explain fully to any before baptism. Hence these five are called mystagogic catecheses. As to baptism, St. Cyril teaches (Procat. n. 16. p. 12.) that it imprints an indelible signet, or spiritual character in the soul, which he says (cat. 1. n. 2.) is the mark by which we belong to Christ's flock: he adds, this is conferred by the regeneration, by and in the lotion with water, (cat. 4 & 12. cat. 16. n. 24.) He calls the character given by confirmation the signet of the communication of the Holy Ghost, (cat. 18. n. 33.) and says (cat. 22. n. 7.) it is imprinted on the soul, whilst the forehead is anointed with chrism, (cat. 22. n. 7.) and after by baptism, (ib n. 33.) by which he clearly distinguishes the characters of these two different sacraments, though Mr. Milles (not. in Procat.) has taken great pains to confound them. Saint Cyril teaches that baptism

perfectly remits all sin; but penance, the remedy for sins after it, does not quite efface them, as wounds that are healed leave still scars. (cat. 18. n. 20.) He attributes great virtue to the exorcisms for purifying the soul (Procat. n. 9.) and says, as incantations give a diabolical virtue to defile the soul, so does the invocation of the Holy Ghost give a virtue to the water, and gives it the power to sanctify. (cat. 3. n. 3.) He says the same of the blessed oil, (cat. 20. n. 3. p. 3.) and establishes clearly, confirmation to be a distinct sacrament from baptism: he calls it the chrism and the mystical ointment, (cat. 21.) and says it is to arm and fortify us against the enemies of our salvation, (ib. p. 317. n. 4.) and that whilst the body is anointed with this visible ointment, the soul is sanctified by the holy and life-giving spirit. (ib. n. 3.) In his nineteenth catechesis, the first mystagogic, he explains the force of the baptismal renunciations of the devil and his pomps. In the twentieth the other ceremonies of baptism, and what they mean; in the twenty-first, the sacrament of confirmation; in the twenty-second, that of the blessed eucharist; in the twenty-third, or last, the liturgy or sacrifice of the mass and communion. As to the blessed eucharist, he says, by it we are made *concorporeal* and *consanguineal* with Christ, by *his body and blood being distributed through our bodies.* (cat. 22. n. 1. 3.) This same strong expression which wonderfully declares the strict union which is the effect of this sacrament, is used by St. Chrysostom, (hom. 6. in Hebr. &c.) St. Isidore, of Pelusium, (l. 3. Ep. 195.) St. Cyril, of Alexandria, (l. 10. in Joan. p. 862. dial. de Trin. p. 407.) &c. Our holy doctor explains to his Neophytes, the doctrine of transubstantiation in so plain terms, that no one can doubt of it being the faith of the church in the fourth age. The learned Lutheran Pfaffius, (Dis. de oblatione Euchar. c. 38. p. 327.) owns it cannot be denied that this is Cyril's opinion. Grabe affirms the same. (not. in l. 5. Irenæi, c. 2. p. 399.) This twenty-second catechesis alone puts it out of dispute. "Do not look "upon the bread and wine as bare and "common elements, for they are the Body "and Blood of Christ, as our Lord assures "us. Although thy sense suggest this to "thee, let faith make thee firm and sure. "Judge not of the thing by the taste, but "be certain from faith that thou hast been "honoured with the gift of Christ's Body "and Blood. (cat. 22. n. 6. p. 321.) When "he has pronounced and said of the "bread: 'This is my Body,' who will "after this, dare to doubt? and when "he has assured and said, 'This is my "Blood;' who can ever hesitate, saying "it is not his blood? (n. 1. p. 32.) He "changed water into wine, which is akin "to blood, in Cana; and shall we not "think him worthy our belief, when he "has changed μεταβαλλων wine into "blood? (n. 2.) &c. Wherefore let us "receive them with an entire belief as "Christ's Body and Blood, for under the "figure of bread is given to thee his Body, "and under the figure of wine his Blood, "that when thou hast received Christ's "Body and Blood thou be made one body "and blood with him: for so we carry "him about in us, his Body and Blood "being distributed through our bodies." (n. 3. p. 320.) We learn the manner of receiving the blessed sacrament from his catech. 23. "Putting your left hand "under your right," says he, "form a "throne of your right hand to receive "the king; hold it hollow, receiving on "it the Body of Christ. Answer, Amen. "Carefully sanctify your eyes by touching "them with the holy Body, being very "watchful that no part of it fall. Ap- "proach to the Cup of the Blood, bowed "in a posture of adoration and reverence; "saying, Amen, take of the blood of "Christ. Whilst yet something of the "moisture sticks on your lips, touch "them with your hand, and by applying "it then to your eyes, forehead, and other "senses, sanctify them."

In his twenty-third or last catechesis, he calls the mass an unbloody sacrifice, a victim of propitiation, a supreme worship, &c. (n. 8. p. 327.) He explains the Preface, and the other principal parts of it, especially the Communion, and mentions the priest from the altar crying out to the faithful, before they approached to receive, Τὰ ἁγια τοῖς ἁγιοις. He expounds the Lord's Prayer, and mentions the commemorations for the living and the dead. Of the latter he writes thus: (n. 9. p. 328.) "We also pray

" for the deceased holy fathers, bishops, " and all in general who are dead, believ- " ing that this will be a great succour to " those souls for which prayer is offered, " whilst the holy and most tremendous " victim lies present." And (n. 10. ib.) " If a king, being offended at certain " persons, had banished them, and their " friends offer him a rich garland for " them, will not he be moved to release " their punishment? In like manner we, " offering prayers to God for the dead, " though they be sinners, do not make a " garland, but we offer Christ sacrificed " for our sins, striving to appease and " make our merciful God propitious both " to them and ourselves." This very passage is quoted out of St. Cyril, in the sixth century, by Eustratius, a priest of Constantinople, author of the life of the patriarch Eutychius, in his book on praying for the dead, or on the state of the dead, published by Leo Allatius, l. De Consensu Eccl. Orient. & Occid. De Purgat. & in Bibl. Patr. t. 27. It is also cited by Nicon the monk, in his Pandect.

St. Cyril's famous letter to Constantius, On the Apparition of the Cross in the Heavens, was wrote by him soon after he was raised to the episcopal dignity, either in the same year, 350, or in the following.

A sermon On the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, bears the name of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in almost all the MSS: but the custom of carrying blessed candles in procession that day, mentioned in this discourse, was only introduced at Jerusalem, at the suggestion of a devout lady named Icelia, about the middle of the fifth century, about sixty years after the death of St. Cyril. Other passages in this discourse seem clearly levelled against the heresy of Nestorius. The style is also more pompous and adorned than that of St. Cyril, nor abounds with parentheses like his. It is a beautiful, eloquent, and solid piece, and was probably composed by some priest of the church of Jerusalem, whose name was Cyril, about the sixth century, when either Sallust or Elias was patriarch. See Dom Touttée, and Ceillier, t. 6. p. 544.

ST. EDWARD, KING AND MARTYR.

He was monarch of all England, and succeeded his father, the glorious king Edgar, in 975, being thirteen years old. He followed in all things the counsels of St. Dunstan; and his ardour in the pursuit of all virtues is not to be expressed. His great love of purity of mind and body, and his fervent devotion, rendered him the miracle of princes, whilst by his modesty, clemency, prudence, charity, and compassion to the poor, he was the blessing and the delight of his subjects. His step-mother, Elfrida, had attempted to set him aside, that the crown might fall on her own son Ethelred, then seven years old. Notwithstanding her treasonable practices, and the frequent proofs of her envy and jealousy, Edward always paid her the most dutiful respect and deference, and treated his brother with the most tender affection. But the fury of her ambition made her insensible to all motives of religion, nature, and gratitude. The young king had reigned three

years and a half, when being one day weary with hunting in a forest near Wareham, in Dorsetshire, he paid a visit to his step-mother at Corfesgeate, now Corfe-castle, in the isle of Purbeck, and desired to see his young brother, at the door. The treacherous queen caused a servant to stab him in the belly whilst he was stooping out of courtesy, after drinking. The king set spurs to his horse, but fell off dead, on the eighteenth of March, 979, his bowels being ripped open so as to fall out. His body was plunged deep into a marsh, but discovered by a pillar of light, and honoured by many miraculous cures of sick persons. It was taken up and buried in the church of our Lady at Wareham; but found entire in three years after, and translated to the monastery at Shaftsbury. His lungs were kept at the village called Edwardstow, in 1001: but the chiefest part of his remains were deposited at Wareham, as the Saxon Chronicle and Florence of Worcester say: but part was afterward removed to Shaftsbury, not Glastenbury, as Caxton mistakes. The long thin knife with which he was stabbed, was kept in the church of Faversham, before the suppression of the monasteries, as Hearne mentions. His name is placed in the Roman Martyrology. The impious Elfrida, being awaked by the stings of conscience, and by the voice of miracles, retired from the world, and built the monasteries of Wherwell and Ambresbury, in the first of which she lived and died in the practice of penance. The reign of her son Ethelred was weak and unfortunate, and the source of the greatest miseries to the kingdom, especially from the Danes. See Malmesbury, Brompton, abbot of Jorval, in Yorkshire, and Ranulf Higden, in his Polychronicon, published by Gale. Also an old MS. life of the saint, quoted by Hearne, on Langtoft's Chronicle, t. 2. p. 628, and from the MSS. lives of saints, in the hands of Mr. Sheldon, of Weston.

ST. ANSELM, BISHOP OF LUCCA, C.

He was a native of Mantua, and was educated there in grammar and dialectic. Having entered himself among the clergy, he spent some time in the study of theology and the

canon law, and laid that foundation of learning, which, joined with his natural genius and eminent virtue, qualified him to rise to the highest degree of excellence. Anselm Badagius, a Milanese, bishop of Lucca, was chosen pope in 1061, and took the name of Alexander II. He nominated our saint his successor in the see of Lucca; and he took a journey into Germany to the emperor Henry IV. but out of a scruple, refused to receive the investiture of the bishopric from that prince, so that the pope was obliged to keep in his own hands the administration of the see of Lucca. St. Gregory VII. who succeeded Alexander II. in 1073, ordered Anselm to receive the investiture from Henry. This compliance gave our saint such remorse, that he left his see, and took the monastic habit at Cluni. The pope obliged him to return to his bishopric, which he did. His zeal soon raised him enemies: by virtue of a decree of pope Gregory IX. he attempted to reform the canons of his cathedral, and to oblige them to live in community: this they obstinately refused to do, though they were interdicted by the pope, and afterward excommunicated in a council, in which Peter Igneus, the famous bishop of Albano, presided in the name of his holiness. The holy countess Maud, undertook to expel the refractory canons, but they raised a sedition, and, being supported by the emperor Henry, drove the bishop out of the city, in 1079. St. Anselm retired to the countess Maud, whose director he was; for he was eminently experienced in the paths of an interior life, and, in the greatest hurry of business, he always reserved several hours in the day, which he consecrated to prayer, and attended only to God and himself. Whilst he studied or conversed with others, his heart was virtually united to God, and every object served as it were naturally to raise his affections afresh to his Creator. Pope Gregory suffered him not to bury himself in his retreat, but, during his exile, appointed him apostolic legate in Lombardy, charging him with the care of several diocesses in those parts, which, through the iniquity of the times, had continued long vacant. St. Anselm wrote an apology for Gregory VII. in which he shews that it belongs not to temporal princes to give pastors to the church of Christ, and to confute the pre-

tensions of the antipope Guibert.[a] In another work he proves, that temporal princes cannot dispose of the revenues of the church. St. Anselm died at Mantua, on the eighteenth of March, in 1086. His name occurs on this day, in the Roman Martyrology, and he is honoured at Mantua, as patron of that city. Baldus, his penitentiary, has wrote his life, in which he ascribes to him several miracles. See it in Canisius's Lect. Antiq. t. 3. p. 372.

ST. FRIDIAN, ERIGDIAN, OR FRIGDIAN, C.

BISHOP OF LUCCA.

He is said to have been son to a king of Ulster in Ireland, at least he is looked upon as of Irish extraction. Travelling into Italy, to improve himself in ecclesiastical learning and virtue, he made such progress that, upon the death of Geminian, bishop of Lucca, he was chosen bishop of that extensive diocess, the eleventh from St. Paulinus, founder of that church, said to have been a disciple of St. Peter. St. Gregory the Great assures us, that he miraculously checked an impetuous flood of the river Auser, now called the Serchio, when it threatened to drown great part of the city. St. Fridian died in 578, and was buried in a place where the church now stands, which bears his name. Pope Alexander II. sent for some regular canons from this church to establish that order in the churches of St. John Lateran, and of the Cross of Jerusalem, at Rome, but, in 1507, the congregation of St. Frigdian was united to that of St. John Lateran.[1] See St. Gregory the Great, l. 3. Dial. c. 9. Bede, Notker, Raban, Usuard, and the Roman Martyrology, on the eighteenth of March. Also, Innocent III. c. 34. de Testibus et Attestationibus. In Decreto Gregoriano. Rursus id. c. 8. de Testibus cogendis. Ib. iterum, de Verborum Significatione. See also Dempster (of the family of the barons of Muresk, a Scotchman, public professor, first in several towns in Flan-

[1] See F. Hehot, t. 2. p. 50.

[a] This work is published by Canisius, Lect. Antiq. t. 3. p. 389. and Bibl. Patr. Lugdun. t. 18. Colon. t. 10.

ders, afterward at Pisa, and lastly, at Bononia, where he died in 1625) in his Etruria Regalis, t. 2. l. 5. c. 6. p. 299. which work was printed with many cuts, in two volumes folio, at Florence, in 1723, at the expense of Thomas Coke, late earl of Leicester, then on his travels. And principally see the Ecclesiastical history of Lucca, printed in that city, in 1736, and again in 1741, in 12mo.

MARCH XIX.

SAINT JOSEPH.

THE glorious St. Joseph was lineally descended from the greatest kings of the tribe of Juda, and from the most illustrious of the ancient patriarchs; but his true glory consisted in his humility and virtue. The history of his life hath not been written by men; but his principal actions are recorded by the Holy Ghost himself. God intrusted him with the education of his divine Son, manifested in the flesh. In this view he was espoused to the Virgin Mary. It is an evident mistake of some writers, that by a former wife he was the father of St. James the Less, and of the rest who are styled in the gospels the brothers of our Lord: for these were only cousin-germans to Christ, the sons of Mary, sister to the Blessed Virgin, wife of Alphæus, who was living at the time of our Redeemer's crucifixion. St. Jerom assures us,[1] that St. Joseph always preserved his virgin chastity; and it is of faith that nothing contrary thereto ever took place with regard to his chaste spouse, the blessed Virgin Mary. He was given her by heaven to be the protector of her chastity, to secure her from calumnies in the birth of the Son of God, and to assist her in his education, and in her journies, fatigues and persecutions. How great was the purity and

[1] L. adv. Helvid. c. 9.

sanctity of him who was chosen the guardian of the most spotless Virgin! This holy man seems, for a considerable time, to have been unacquainted that the great mystery of the Incarnation had been wrought in her by the Holy Ghost. Conscious therefore of his own chaste behaviour towards her, it could not but raise a great concern in his breast, to find that, notwithstanding the sanctity of her deportment, yet he might be well assured that she was with child. But being *a just man*, as the scripture calls him, and consequently possessed of all virtues, especially of charity and mildness towards his neighbour, he was determined to leave her privately, without either condemning or accusing her, committing the whole cause to God. These his perfect dispositions were so acceptable to God, the lover of justice, charity, and peace, that before he put his design in execution, he sent an angel from heaven, not to reprehend any thing in his holy conduct, but to dissipate all his doubts and fears, by revealing to him this adorable mystery. How happy should we be, if we were as tender in all that regards the reputation of our neighbour; as free from entertaining any injurious thought or suspicion, whatever certainty our conjectures or our senses may seem to rely on; and as guarded in our tongue! We commit these faults only because in our hearts we are devoid of that true charity and simplicity, whereof St. Joseph sets us so eminent an example on this occasion.

In the next place we may admire, in secret contemplation, with what devotion, respect, and tenderness, he beheld and adored the first of all men, the new-born Saviour of the world, and with what fidelity he acquitted himself of his double charge, the education of Jesus, and the guardianship of his blessed mother. "He was truly the faithful and prudent "servant," says St. Bernard,[2] "whom our Lord appointed "the master of his household, the comfort and support of his "mother, his fosterfather and most faithful co-operator in "the execution of his deepest counsels on earth." "What "a happiness," says the same father, "not only to see Jesus "Christ, but also to hear him, to carry him in his arms, to

[2] Hom. 2. super Missus est, n. 16. p. 742.

"lead him from place to place, to embrace and caress him, "to feed him, and to be privy to all the great secrets which "were concealed from the princes of this world!"

"O astonishing elevation! O unparalleled dignity! cries "out the pious Gerson,[3] in a devout address to St. Joseph, "that the mother of God, queen of heaven, should call you "her lord; that God himself, made man, should call you fa- "ther, and obey your commands. O glorious Triad on earth, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph, how dear a family to the glorious "Trinity in heaven, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Nothing "is on earth so great, so good, so excellent." Amidst these his extraordinary graces, what more wonderful than his humility! He conceals his privileges, lives as the most obscure of men, publishes nothing of God's great mysteries, makes no further inquiries into them, leaving it to God to manifest them at his own time, seeks to fulfil the order of providence in his regard, without interfering with any thing but what concerns himself. Though descended from the royal family which had long been in possession of the throne of Judæa, he is content with his condition, that of a mechanic or handicraftsman,[a] and makes it his business, by labouring in it, to maintain himself, his spouse, and the divine Child.

We should be ungrateful to this great saint, if we did not remember that it is to him, as the instrument under God, that we are indebted for the preservation of the infant Jesus from Herod's jealousy and malice, manifested in the slaughter of the Innocents. An angel appearing to him in his sleep, bade him arise, take the child Jesus, and fly with him into Egypt, and remain there till he should again have notice from him to return. This sudden and unexpected flight must have exposed Joseph to many inconveniencies and sufferings in so long a journey, with a little babe and a tender virgin, the

[3] Serm. de Nativ.

[a] This appears from Mat. xiii. 55. St. Justin, (Dial. n. 89. ed. Ben. p. 126.) St. Ambrose (in Luc. p. 3.) and Theodoret (b. 3. hist. c. 18) say he worked in wood, as a carpenter. St. Hilary (in Mat. c. 14. p. 17.) and St. Peter Chrysologus (Serm. 48.) say he wrought in iron as a smith; probably he wrought both in iron and in wood; which opinion St. Justin favours, by saying: "He and Jesus made ploughs "and yokes for oxen."

greater part of the way being through deserts, and among strangers; yet he alleges no excuses, nor inquires at what time they were to return. St. Chrysostom observes that God treats thus all his servants, sending them frequent trials, to clear their hearts from the rust of self-love, but intermixing seasons of consolation.(4) "Joseph," says he, "is anxious on "seeing the Virgin with child; an angel removes that fear: "he rejoices at the child's birth, but a great fear succeeds; "the furious king seeks to destroy the child, and the whole "city is in an uproar to take away his life. This is followed "by another joy, the adoration of the Magi: a new sorrow "then arises; he is ordered to fly into a foreign unknown "country, without help or acquaintance." It is the opinion of the fathers, that upon their entering Egypt, at the presence of the child Jesus, all the oracles of that superstitious country were struck dumb, and the statues of their gods trembled, and in many places fell to the ground, according to that of Isaiah xix. *And the statues of the Egyptians shall be shaken in his presence.*(b) The fathers also attribute to this holy visit the spiritual benediction poured on that country, which made it for many ages most fruitful in saints.(c)

After the death of king Herod, which was notified to St. Joseph by a vision, God ordered him to return with the child and his mother into the land of Israel, which our saint readily obeyed. But when he arrived in Judæa, hearing that Archelaus succeeded Herod in that part of the country, apprehensive he might be infected with his father's vices, cruelty and ambition, he feared on that account to settle there, as he would otherwise probably have done, for the more commodious education of the child. And therefore being directed by God in another vision, he retired into the dominions of his brother Herod Antipas, in Galilee, to his former habitation in Nazareth, where the wonderful occurrences of our Lord's birth

(4) Hom. 8. in Mat. t. 7. p. 123. ed. Ben.

(b) This is affirmed by St. Athanasius, (l. de Incarn.) Eusebius, (Demonst. Evang. l. 6. c. 20.) St. Cyril, (cat. 10.) St. Ambrose, (in Ps. 118. Octon. 5.) St Jerom, (in Isai. 19.) St. Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria, (in Isai.) Sozomen, (l. 5. c. 20.) &c.

(c) See the Lives of the Fathers of the desert.

were less known. St. Joseph being a strict observer of the Mosaic law, in conformity to its direction, annually repaired to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Archelaus, being banished by Augustus, and Judæa made a Roman province, he had now nothing more to fear at Jerusalem. Our Saviour being advanced to the twelfth year of his age, accompanied his parents thither; who having performed the usual ceremonies of the feast, were now returning with many of their neighbours and acquaintance towards Galilee, and never doubting but that Jesus had joined himself with some of the company, they travelled on for a whole day's journey without further inquiry after him, before they discovered that he was not with them. But when night came on, and they could hear no tidings of him among their kindred and acquaintance, they, in the deepest affliction, returned with the utmost speed to Jerusalem; where, after an anxious search of three days, they found him in the temple, sitting among the learned doctors of the law, hearing them discourse, and asking them such questions as raised the admiration of all that heard him, and made them astonished at the ripeness of his understanding: nor were his parents less surprised on this occasion. And when his mother told him with what grief and earnestness they had sought him, and to express her sorrow for that, though short, privation of his presence, said to him: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with "us? Behold, thy father and I sought thee in great affliction "of mind:" she received for answer, that being the Messias and Son of God, sent by his Father into the world in order to redeem it, he must be about his Father's business, the same for which he had been sent into the world; and therefore that it was most likely for them to find him in his Father's house: intimating that his appearing in public on this occasion, was to advance his Father's honour, and to prepare the princes of the Jews to receive him for their Messias; pointing out to them from the prophets the time of his coming. But though in thus staying in the temple, unknown to his parents, he did something without their leave in obedience to his heavenly Father, yet in all other things he was obedient to them, returning with them to Nazareth, and there living in all dutiful subjection to them.

Aelred, our countryman, abbot of Rieval, in his sermon on losing the child Jesus in the temple, observes that this his conduct to his parents is a true representation of that which he shews us, whilst he often withdraws himself for a short time from us to make us seek him the more earnestly. He thus describes the sentiments of his holy parents on this occasion:[5] "Let us consider what was the happiness of that "blessed company, in the way to Jerusalem, to whom it was "granted to behold his face, to hear his sweet words, to see in "him the signs of divine wisdom and virtue; and in their "mutual discourse to receive the influence of his saving "truths and example. The old and young admire him. I "believe boys of his age were struck with astonishment at the "gravity of his manners and words. I believe such rays of "grace darted from his blessed countenance as drew on him "the eyes, ears, and hearts of every one. And what tears do "they shed when he is not with them." He goes on considering what must be the grief of his parents when they had lost him; what their sentiments, and how earnest their search: but what their joy when they found him again. "Discover to me," says he, "O my Lady, mother of my God, "what were your sentiments, what your astonishment and "your joy when you saw him again, and sitting not amongst "boys, but amidst the doctors of the law? when you saw "every one's eyes fixed on him, every one's ears listening "to him, great and small, learned and unlearned, intent only "on his words and motions. You now say: I have found "him whom I love. I will hold him, and will no more let "him part from me. Hold him, sweet Lady, hold him fast; "rush on his neck, dwell on his embraces, and compensate "the three days' absence by multiplied delights in your "present enjoyment of him. You tell him that you and his "father sought him in grief. For what did you grieve? not "for fear of hunger or want in him whom you knew to be "God: but I believe you grieved to see yourself deprived of "the delights of his presence even for a short time; for the "Lord Jesus is so sweet to those who taste him, that his "shortest absence is a subject of the greatest grief to them."

[5] Bibl. Patr. t. 13.

This mystery is an emblem of the devout soul, and Jesus sometimes withdrawing himself, and leaving her in dryness, that she may be more earnest in seeking him. But, above all, how eagerly ought the soul which has lost God by sin, seek him again, and how bitterly ought she to deplore her extreme misfortune?

As no farther mention is made of St. Joseph, he must have died before the marriage of Cana, and the beginning of our divine Saviour's ministry. We cannot doubt but he had the happiness of Jesus and Mary attending at his death, praying by him, assisting and comforting him in his last moments. Whence he is particularly invoked for the great grace of a happy death, and the spiritual presence of Jesus in that tremendous hour. The church reads the history of the patriarch Joseph on his festival, who was styled the Saviour of Egypt, which he delivered from perishing by famine; and was appointed the faithful master of the household of Putiphar, and of that of Pharaoh and his kingdom. But our great saint was chosen by God the saviour of the life of him who was the true Saviour of the souls of men, rescuing him from the tyranny of Herod. He is now glorified in heaven, as the guardian and keeper of his Lord on earth. As Pharaoh said to the Egyptians in their distress: "Go to Joseph;" so may we confidently address ourselves to the mediation of him, to whom God, made man, was subject and obedient on earth.

The devout Gerson expressed the warmest devotion to St. Joseph, which he endeavoured by letters and sermons to promote. He composed an office in his honour, and wrote his life in twelve poems, called Josephina. He enlarges on all the circumstances of his life by pious affections and meditations. St. Teresa chose him the chief patron of her Order. In the sixth chapter of her life she writes thus: "I chose "the glorious St. Joseph for my patron, and I commend "myself in all things singularly to his intercession. I do not "remember ever to have asked of God any thing by him "which I did not obtain. I never knew any one, who by "invoking him did not advance exceedingly in virtue: for he "assists, in a wonderful manner, all who address themselves "to him." St. Francis of Sales, throughout his whole nine-

teenth entertainment, extremely recommends devotion to him, and extols his merits, principally his virginity, humility, constancy, and courage. The Syrians and other eastern churches celebrate his festival on the twentieth of July; the western church, on the nineteenth of March. Pope Gregory XV. in 1621, and Urban VIII. in 1642, commanded it to be kept a holyday of obligation.

The holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, presents to us the most perfect model of heavenly conversation on earth. How did those two seraphims, Mary and Joseph, live in their poor cottage? They always enjoyed the presence of Jesus, always burning with the most ardent love for him, inviolably attached to his sacred person, always employed and living only for him. What were their transports in beholding him, their devotion in listening to him, and their joy in possessing him? O heavenly life! O anticipation of the heavenly bliss! O divine conversation! We may imitate them, and share some degree of this advantage, by conversing often with Jesus, and by the contemplation of his most amiable goodness, kindling the fire of his holy love in our breasts. The effects of this love, if it be sincere, will necessarily appear in our putting on his spirit, and imitating his example and virtues; and in our studying to walk continually in the divine presence, finding God every where, and esteeming all the time lost which we do not spend with God, or for his honour.

ST. ALCMUND, M.

He was son of Eldred, and brother of Osred, kings of the Northumbrians. During his temporal prosperity, the greater he was in power so much the more meek and humble was he in his heart, and so much the more affable to others. He was poor amidst riches, because he knew no greater pleasure than to strip himself for the relief of the distressed. Being driven from his kingdom, together with his father, by rebellious subjects, in league with Danish plunderers, he lived among the Picts above twenty years in banishment; learning more heartily to despise earthly vanities, and making it his

whole study to serve the King of kings. His subjects, groaning under the yoke of an insupportable tyranny, took up arms against their oppressors, and induced the royal prince, upon motives of compassion for their distress and a holy zeal for religion, to put himself at their head. Several battles were prosperously fought; but at length the pious prince was murdered by the contrivance of king Eardulf, the usurper, as Matthew of Westminster, Simeon of Durham, and Florence of Worcester say. Dr. Brown Willis, in his Notitia of parliamentary boroughs, writes, with some ancients, that he was slain by the Danes, about the year 819. His body was interred at Lilleshult, in Shropshire; but afterward translated to Derby, where he was honoured with great devotion as patron of the town, on the nineteenth of March. An old manuscript sermon preached in his church at Derby, about the year 1140, extant in a manuscript collection of sermons of that age in my hands, folio 138, gives a particular history of this translation of his relicks to Derby, where his church became famous for miracles, and for the resort of pilgrims. See on this saint the history of John of Glastenbury, Matthew of Westminster, the MS. sermon above-mentioned, and Henschenius, t. 3. Mart. p. 47.

MARCH XX.

ST. CUTHBERT, CONFESSOR,
BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE.

From his life written by Bede, and from that author's church-history, b. 4. ch. 27 to ch. 32. Simeon Dunelm, or rather Turgot, hist. Dunelm, published by Bedford: the old Latin hymn on St. Cuthbert, MS. in Bibl. Cotton. n. 41. apud Wanley, p. 184. and four Latin prayers, in honour of St. Cuthbert, MS. n. 190. in the library of Durham church. Warnley, Catal. t. 2. p. 297. Harpsfield, Sæc. 7. c. 34. Hearne on Langtoft, t. 2. p. 687. N. B. The history of Durham, which is here quoted, was compiled by Turgot, prior of Durham, down to the year 1104, and continued to the year 1161 by Simeon.

A. D. 687.

When the Northumbrians, under the pious king Oswald, had, with great fervour, embraced the christian faith, the holy bishop St. Aidan founded two monasteries, that of Mailros, on the bank of the Tweed, and another in the isle of Lindisfarne, afterward called Holy Island, four miles distant from Berwick. In both he established the rule of St. Columba; and usually resided himself in the latter. St. Cuthbert[a] was born not very far from Mailros, and in his youth was much edified by the devout deportment of the holy inhabitants of that house, whose fervour in the service of God, and the discharge of the duties of a monastic life, he piously endeavoured to imitate on the mountains where he kept his father's sheep. It happened one night, that, whilst he was watching in prayer, near his flock, according to his custom, he saw the soul of St. Aidan carried up to heaven by angels, at the very instant that holy man departed this life in the isle of Lindisfarne. Serious reflections on the happiness of such a death determined the pious young man to repair, without

[a] Cuthbert signifies Illustrious for skill: or Guthbertus, Worthy of God.

delay, to Mailros, where he put on the monastic habit, whilst Eata was abbot, and St. Boisil prior. He studied the holy scriptures under the latter, and in fervour surpassed all his brethren in every monastic exercise. Eata being called to govern the new monastery of Rippon, founded by king Alcfrid, he took with him St. Cuthbert, and committed to him the care of entertaining strangers; which charge is usually the most dangerous in a religious state. Cuthbert washed the feet of others and served them with wonderful humility and meekness, always remembering that Christ himself is served in his members. And he was most careful that the functions of Martha should never impair his spirit of recollection. When St. Wilfred was made abbot of Rippon, St. Cuthbert returned with Eata to Mailros; and St. Boisil dying of the great pestilence, in 664, he was chosen provost or prior in his place.

In this station, not content by word and example to form his monks to perfect piety, he laboured assiduously among the people to bring them off from several heathenish customs and superstitious practices which still obtained among them. For this purpose, says our venerable historian, he often went out, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, to preach the way of life to such as were gone astray. Parochial churches being at this time very scarce in the country, it was the custom for the country people to flock about a priest or ecclesiastical person, when he came into any village, for the sake of his instructions; hearkening willingly to his words, and more willingly practising the good lessons he taught them. St. Cuthbert excelled all others by a most persuasive and moving eloquence; and such a brightness appeared in his angelical face in delivering the word of God to the people, that none of them durst conceal from him any part of their misbehaviour, but all laid their conscience open before him, and endeavoured by his injunctions and counsels to expiate the sins they had confessed, by worthy fruits of penance. He chiefly visited those villages and hamlets at a distance, which, being situate among high and craggy mountains, and inhabited by the most rustic, ignorant, and savage people, were the less frequented by other teachers. After

St. Cuthbert had lived many years at Mailros, St. Eata, abbot also of Lindisfarne, removed him thither, and appointed him prior of that larger monastery. By the perfect habit of mortification and prayer the saint had attained to so eminent a spirit of contemplation, that he seemed rather an angel than a man. He often spent whole nights in prayer, and sometimes, to resist sleep, worked or walked about the island whilst he prayed. If he heard others complain that they had been disturbed in their sleep, he used to say, that he should think himself obliged to any one that awaked him out of his sleep, that he might sing the praises of his Creator, and labour for his honour. His very countenance excited those who saw him to a love of virtue. He was so much addicted to compunction, and inflamed with heavenly desires, that he could never say mass without tears. He often moved penitents, who confessed to him their sins, to abundant tears, by the torrents of his own, which he shed for them. His zeal in correcting sinners was always sweetened with tender charity and meekness. The saint had governed the monastery of Lindisfarne, under his abbot, several years, when earnestly aspiring to a closer union with God, he retired, with his abbot's consent, into the little isle of Farne, nine miles from Lindisfarne, there to lead an austere eremitical life. The place was then uninhabited, and afforded him neither water, tree, nor corn. Cuthbert built himself a hut with a wall and trench about it, and, by his prayers, obtained a well of fresh water in his own cell. Having brought with him instruments of husbandry, he sowed first wheat, which failed; then barley, which, though sowed out of season, yielded a plentiful crop. He built a house at the entry of the island from Lindisfarne, to lodge the brethren that came to see him, whom he there met and entertained with heavenly conferences. Afterward he confined himself within his own wall and trench, and gave spiritual advice only through a window, without ever stirring out of his cell. He could not, however, refuse an interview with the holy abbess and royal virgin Elfleda, whom her father, king Oswi, had dedicated to God from her birth, and who, in 680, succeeded St. Hilda in the government of the abbey of Whitby. This was held in the isle of Cocket, then filled

with holy anchorets. This close solitude was to our saint an uninterrupted exercise of divine love, praise, and compunction; in which he enjoyed a paradise of heavenly delights, unknown to the world.

In a synod of bishops, held by St. Theodorus at Twiford, on the river Alne, in the kingdom of Northumberland, it was resolved, that Cuthbert should be raised to the episcopal see of Lindisfarne. But as neither letters, nor messengers, were of force to obtain his consent to undertake the charge, king Egfrid, who had been present at the council, and the holy bishop Trumwin, with many others, sailed over to his island, and conjured him, on their knees, not to refuse his labours, which might be attended with so much advantage to souls. Their remonstrances were so pressing, that the saint could not refuse going with them, at least to the council, but weeping most bitterly. He received the episcopal consecration at York, the Easter following, from the hands of St. Theodorus, assisted by six other bishops. In this new dignity the saint continued the practice of his former austerities; but remembering what he owed to his neighbour, he went about preaching and instructing with incredible fruit, and without any intermission. He made it every where his particular care to exhort, feed, and protect the poor. By divine revelation he saw and mentioned to others, at the very instant it happened, the overthrow and death of king Egfrid, by the Picts, in 685. He cured, by water which he had blessed, the wife of a noble Thane, who lay speechless and senseless at the point of death, and many others. For his miracles he was called the Thaumaturgus of Britain. But the most wonderful of his miracles was that which grace wrought in him by the perfect victory which it gave him over his passions. His zeal for justice was most ardent; but nothing seemed ever to disturb the peace and serenity of his mind. By the close union of his soul with God, whose will alone he sought and considered in all things, he overlooked all temporal events, and under all accidents his countenance was always cheerful, always the same: particularly in bearing all bodily pains, and every kind of adversity with joy, he was invincible. His attention to, and pure view of God in all events, and in all his actions,

arose from the most tender and sweet love, which was in his soul a constant source of overflowing joy. Prayer was his centre. His brethren discovered sometimes that he spent three or four nights together in that heavenly exercise, allowing himself very little or no sleep. When St. Ebba, the royal virgin, sister to the kings St. Oswald and Oswi, abbess of the double monastery of Coldingham, invited him to edify that house by his exhortations, he complied, and staid there some days. In the night, whilst others were asleep, he stole out to his devotions according to his custom in other places. One of the monks who watched and followed him one night, found that the saint, going down to the sea-shore, went into the water up to the arm-pits, and there sung praises to God. In this manner he passed the silent time of the night. Before the break of day he came out, and having prayed awhile on the sands, returned to the monastery, and was ready to join in morning lauds.

St. Cuthbert, foreseeing his death to approach, resigned his bishoprick, which he had held two years, and retired to his solitude in Farne Island, to prepare himself for his last passage. Two months after he fell sick, and permitted Herefrid, the abbot of Lindisfarne, who came to visit him, to leave two of his monks to attend him in his last moments. He received the Viaticum of the body and blood of Christ from the hands of the abbot Herefrid, at the hour of midnight prayer, and immediately lifting up his eyes, and stretching out his hands, sweetly slept in Christ on the twentieth day of March, 687. He died in the island of Farne: but, according to his desire, his body was buried in the monastery of Saint Peter in Lindisfarne, on the right side of the high altar. Bede relates many miracles performed at his tomb; and adds, that eleven years after his death, the monks taking up his body, instead of dust which they expected, found it unputrified, with the joints pliable, and the clothes fresh and entire.[1] They put it into a new coffin, placed above the pavement, over the former grave: and several miracles were there wrought, even by touching the clothes which covered the

[1] Bede, Hist. b. 4. c. 30.

coffin. William of Malmesbury[2] writes, that the body was again found incorrupt four hundred and fifteen years afterward at Durham, and publicly shewn. In the Danish invasions, the monks carried it away from Lindisfarne; and, after several removals on the continent, settled with their treasure on a woody hill almost surrounded by the river Were, formed by nature for a place of defence. They built there a church of stone, which Aldhune, bishop of Lindisfarne, dedicated in 995, and placed in it the body of St. Cuthbert with great solemnity, transferring hither his episcopal see.[b] Many princes enriched exceedingly the new monastery and cathedral, in honour of St. Cuthbert. Succeeding kings, out of devotion to this saint, declared the bishop a count palatine, with an extensive civil jurisdiction.[c] The great king Alfred, who honoured St. Cuthbert as his particular patron, and ascribed to his intercession some of his greatest victories, and other blessings which he received, was a special benefactor to this church.[3] The present cathedral was built in 1080. When the shrine of the saint was plundered and demolished by the order of king Henry VIII. the body of St. Cuthbert, which was found still intire, as Harpsfield testifies, met with greater regard than many others; for it was not burnt, as were those of St. Edmund, king and martyr, St. Thomas, and others. After the king's officers had carried away the plunder of his shrine, it was privately buried under the place where the shrine before stood, though the spot is now unknown. His ring, in which a sapphire is enchased, was given by lord viscount Montaigne to the bishop of Chalcedon,[4] who had long been sheltered from the persecution in the house of that nobleman,[d] and was by him left in the monastery of Eng-

[2] L. 4. Pontif. Angl.—[3] See Hickes, Thes. Ling. Septentr. Præf. p. 8.—[4] Bp. Smith, Flores Hist. Eccles. p. 120.

[b] Dunelm, or Durham, signifies a hill upon waters, from the Saxon words Dun, a hill, and Holme, a place situate in or among the waters.

[c] See Dugdale's history of the cathedral of Durham; and Dr. Brown Willis on the same.

[d] Dr. Richard Smith, bishop of Chalcedon, relates in his life of Margaret lady Montaigne, that queen Elizabeth, out of her singular regard for this lady, from the time she had been lady of honour in the court of queen Mary and king Philip, tacitly granted her house a kind of privilege by never allowing it to be searched on account of religious persecution; so that sometimes sixty priests at once lay hid in it.

lish canonesses at Paris, which is also possessed of a tooth of St. Cuthbert. A copy of St. John's gospel, which, after the example of his master St. Boisil, he often read to nourish the fire of divine love in his soul, was put into his coffin when he was buried and found in his tomb. It is now in the possession of Mr. Thomas Philips, canon of Tongres, on whom the present earl of Litchfield bestowed it. The copy is judged undoubtedly genuine by our ablest Protestant antiquaries, who carefully examined it.

The life of St. Cuthbert was almost a continual prayer. There was no business, no company, no place, how public soever, which did not afford him an opportunity, and even a fresh motive to pray. Not content to pass the day in this exercise, he continued it constantly for several hours of the night, which was to him a time of light and interior delights. Whatever he saw seemed to speak to him of God, and to invite him to his love. His conversation was on God or heavenly things, and he would have regretted a single moment, which had not been employed with God or for his honour, as utterly lost. The inestimable riches which he found in God, shewed him how precious every moment is, in which he had it in his power to enjoy the divine converse. The immensity of God, who is present in us and in all creatures, and whom millions of worlds cannot confine or contain; his eternity, to which all time co-exists, and which has neither beginning, end, nor succession; the unfathomed abyss of his judgments; the sweetness of his providence; his adorable sanctity; his justice, wisdom, goodness, mercy, and love, especially as displayed in the wonderful mystery of the Incarnation, and in the doctrine, actions, and sufferings of our Blessed Redeemer; in a word, all the incomprehensible attributes of the Divinity, and the mysteries of his grace and mercy, successively filled his mind and heart, and kindled in his soul the most sweet and ardent affections, in which his thirst and his delight, which were always fresh and always insatiable, gave him a kind of anticipated taste of paradise. For holy contemplation discovers to a soul a new most wonderful world, whose beauty, riches, and pure delights astonish and transport her out of

herself. St. Teresa, coming from prayer, said she came from a world greater and more beautiful beyond comparison, than a thousand worlds, like that which we behold with our corporal eyes, could be. St. Bernard was always torn from this holy exercise with regret, when obliged to converse with men in the world, in which he trembled, lest he should contract some attachment to creatures, which would separate him from the chaste embraces of his heavenly spouse. The venerable priest, John of Avila, when he came from the altar, always found commerce with men insipid and insupportable.

SAINT WULFRAN, ARCHBISHOP OF SENS,
AND APOSTOLIC MISSIONARY IN FRISELAND.

His father was an officer in the armies of king Dagobert, and the saint spent some years in the court of king Clotaire III. and of his mother St. Bathildes, but occupied his heart only on God, despising worldly greatness as empty and dangerous, and daily advancing in virtue in a place where virtue is often little known. His estate of Maurilly he bestowed on the abbey of Fontenelle, or St. Vandrille, in Normandy. He was chosen and consecrated archbishop of Sens, in 682, which diocess he governed during two years and a half with great zeal and sanctity. A tender compassion for the blindness of the idolaters of Friseland, and the example of the English zealous preachers in those parts, moved him to resign his bishoprick with proper advice, and, after a retreat at Fontenelle, to enter Friseland in quality of a poor missionary priest. He baptized great multitudes, with a son of king Radbod, and drew the people from the barbarous custom of sacrificing men to idols. The lot herein decided, on great festivals, who should be the victim; and the person was instantly hanged or cut in pieces. The lot having fallen on one Ovon, St. Wulfran earnestly begged his life of king Radbod: but the people ran tumultuously to the palace, and would not suffer what they called a sacrilege. After many words, they consented that if the God of Wulfran should save Ovon's life, he should ever serve him, and be Wulfran's

slave. The saint betook himself to prayer, and the man, after hanging on the gibbet two hours, being left for dead, by the cord breaking, fell to the ground; and being found alive was given to the saint, and became a monk and priest at Fontenelle. Wulfran also miraculously rescued two children from being drowned in the sea, in honour of the idols. Radbod, who had been an eye-witness to this last miracle, promised to become a Christian, and was instructed among the catechumens. But his criminal delays rendered him unworthy such a mercy. As he was going to step into the baptismal font, he asked where the great number of his ancestors and nobles were in the next world. The saint replied, that hell is the portion of all who die guilty of idolatry. At which the prince drew back, and refused to be baptized, saying, he would go with the greater number. This tyrant sent afterward to St. Willebrord to treat with him about his conversion; but before the arrival of the saint was found dead. St. Wulfran retired to Fontenelle, that he might prepare himself for death, and died there on the twentieth of April, in 720. His relicks were removed to Abbeville, where he is honoured as patron. See his life written by Jonas, monk of Fontenelle, eleven years after his death, purged from spurious additions by Mabillon, sæc. 3. Ben. Fleury, b. 41. t. 9. p. 190. See also the history of the discovery of his relicks at St. Vandrille's accompanied with miracles, and their translation to Rouen in 1062, well written by an anonymous author who assisted at that ceremony, several parts of which work are published by D'Achery, Spicil. t. 3. p. 248. the Bollandists and Mabillon. The Bollandists have added a relation of certain miracles said to have been performed by the relicks of this saint at Abbeville.

MARCH XXI.

ST. BENEDICT, ABBOT,

PATRIARCH OF THE WESTERN MONKS

From St. Gregory, (Dial. l. 2. c. 1.) who assures us that he received his account of this saint from four abbots, the saint's disciples; namely, Constantine, his successor at Monte Cassino, Simplicius, third abbot of that house, Valentinian, the first abbot of the monastery of Lateran, and Honoratus, who succeeded St. Benedict at Subiaco. See the remarks of Mabillon, Annal. Ben. l. 1. p. 3. & l. 2. p. 38. and Act. Sanct. Bened. t. 1. p. 80. Also Dom. Mege, Vie de Saint Benoit avec une histoire abregè de son Ordre, in 4to. An. 1690. Hæften's Disquisitions, and abbot Steingelt's abridgment of the same, and Ziegelbauer and Legipont, Historia Literaria Ord. S. Benedicti Ann. 1754. t. 1. p. 3. and principally, t. 3. p. 2.

A. D. 543.

St. Benedict, or Bennet, was a native of Norcia, formerly an episcopal see in Umbria, and was descended from a family of note, and born about the year 480. The name of his father was Eutropius, and that of his grandfather, Justinian. When he was fit for the higher studies, he was sent by his parents to Rome, and there placed in the public schools. He who till that time knew not what vice was, and trembled at the shadow of sin, was not a little shocked at the licentiousness which he observed in the conduct of some of the Roman youth, with whom he was obliged to converse; and he was no sooner come into the world, but he resolved to bid an eternal farewell to it, not to be entangled in its snares. He therefore left the city privately, and made the best of his way towards the deserts. His nurse, Cyrilla, who loved him tenderly, followed him as far as Afilum, thirty miles from Rome, where he found means to get rid of her, and pursued

his journey alone to the desert mountains of Sublacum, [a] near forty miles from Rome. It is a barren hideous chain of rocks, with a river and lake in the valley. Near this place the saint met a monk of a neighbouring monastery, called Romanus, who gave him the monastic habit, with suitable instructions, and conducted him to a deep narrow cave in the midst of these mountains, almost inaccessible to men. In this cavern, now called the Holy Grotto, the young hermit chose his abode: and Romanus, who kept his secret, brought him hither, from time to time, bread and the like slender provisions, which he retrenched from his own meals, and let them down to the holy recluse with a line, hanging a bell to the cord to give him notice. Bennet seems to have been about fourteen or fifteen years old when he came to Sublacum; St. Gregory says, he was yet a child. He lived three years in this manner known only to Romanus. But God was pleased to manifest his servant to men, that he might shine forth as a light to many. In 497, a certain pious priest in that country, whilst he was preparing a dinner for himself on Easter-Sunday, heard a voice which said: "You "are preparing for yourself a banquet, whilst my servant "Bennet, at Sublacum, is distressed with hunger." The priest immediately set out in quest of the hermit, and with much difficulty found him out. Bennet was surprised to see a man come to him; but before he would enter into conversation with him, he desired they might pray together. They then discoursed for some time on God and heavenly things. At length the priest invited the saint to eat, saying, it was Easter-day, on which it is not reasonable to fast; though St. Bennet answered him, that he knew not that it was the day of so great a solemnity, nor is it to be wondered at, that one so young should not be acquainted with the day of a festival, which was not then observed by all on the same day, or that he should not understand the Lunar cycle, which at that time was known by very few. After their repast the priest returned home. Soon after, certain shepherds discovered the saint near his cave, but at first took him for a wild

[a] Called by the Italians, who frequently soften *l* into *i*, Subiaco.

beast; for he was clad with the skins of beasts, and they imagined no human creature could live among those rocks. When they found him to be a servant of God, they respected him exceedingly, and many of them were moved by his heavenly discourses to embrace, with fervour, a course of perfection. From that time he began to be known, and many visited him, and brought him such sustenance as he would accept: in requital for which he nourished their souls with spiritual instructions. Though he lived sequestered from the world, he was not yet secure from the assaults of the tempter. Wherever we fly the devil still pursues us, and we carry a domestic enemy within our own breasts. St. Gregory relates, that whilst St. Bennet was employed in divine contemplation, the fiend endeavoured to withdraw his mind from heavenly objects, by appearing in the shape of a little black bird; but that, upon his making the sign of the cross, the phantom vanished. After this, by the artifices of this restless enemy, the remembrance of a woman whom the saint had formerly seen at Rome, occurred to his mind, and so strongly affected his imagination, that he was tempted to leave his desert. But blushing at so base a suggestion of the enemy, he threw himself upon some briars and nettles which grew in the place where he was, and rolled himself a long time in them till his body was covered with blood. The wounds of his body stifled all inordinate inclinations, and their smart extinguished the flame of concupiscence. This complete victory seemed to have perfectly subdued that enemy; for he found himself no more molested with its stings.

The fame of his sanctity being spread abroad, it occasioned several to forsake the world, and imitate his penitential manner of life. Some time after, the monks of Vicovara,[a] on the death of their abbot, pitched upon him to succeed him. He was very unwilling to take upon him that charge, which he declined in the spirit of sincere humility, the beloved virtue which he had practised from his infancy, and which was the pleasure of his heart, and is the delight of a God humbled even to the cross, for the love of us. The saint

[a] Vicovara, anciently Varronis Vicus, a village between Subiaco and Tivoli.

soon found by experience that their manners did not square with his just idea of a monastic state. Certain sons of Belial among them carried their aversion so far as to mingle poison with his wine: but when, according to his custom, before he drank of it he made the sign of the cross over the glass, it broke as if a stone had fallen upon it. "God forgive you, "brethren," said the saint, with his usual meekness and tranquillity of soul: "you now see I was not mistaken, when "I told you that your manners, and mine would not agree." He therefore returned to Sublacum; which desert he soon peopled with monks, for whom he built twelve monasteries, placing in each twelve monks with a superior.[b] In one of these twelve monasteries there lived a monk, who, out of sloth, neglected and loathed the holy exercise of mental prayer, insomuch that after the psalmody or divine office was finished, he every day left the church to go to work, whilst his brethren were employed in that holy exercise; for by this private prayer in the church, after the divine office, St. Gregory means pious meditation, as Dom. Mege demonstrates. This slothful monk began to correct his fault upon the charitable admonition of Pompeian, his superior; but,

[b] These twelve monasteries were situated in the same neighbourhood, in the province Valeria. Moderns disagree in their names and description; according to the account of Dom. Mege, which appears most accurate, the first was called Columbaria, now St. Clement's, and stood within sixty paces from the saint's cave, called the Holy Grotto; the second was named of SS. Cosmas and Damian, now St. Scholastica's; the third, St. Michael's; the fourth, of St. Donatus, bishop and martyr; the fifth, St. Mary's, now St. Laurence's; the sixth, St. John Baptist's, situated on the highest part of the rock, but from a fountain which St. Bennet produced there by his prayers, and which still subsists; it is at present called St. John dell' Acqua; the seventh, St. Jerom's; the eighth, Vita Æterna; the ninth, St. Victorian or Victorin's, called, from a martyr of that name, who is patron of the province Valeria; the tenth, at the neighbouring village Trebare; the eleventh, St. Angelus's; the twelfth, at a fountain near the ancient castle called Roca de Bore. These monasteries have been all united in that of St. Scholastica, which remains in a very flourishing condition, and is regarded as the mother-house of the whole Order, being certainly more ancient than that of Mount Cassino. It is a member of the Congregation of St. Justina, and though it is usually given in commendam, by a peculiar distinction, it is governed by a regular abbot chosen by the General Chapter. Of the rest of these twelve monasteries, only some cells or ruins remain. Besides the hundred and forty-four monks which were distributed in these twelve monasteries, St. Gregory tells us, that the holy patriarch retained a small number with himself, by which it appears that he continued to live ordinarily in a distinct little monastery or hermitage about his grotto, though he always superintended and governed all these houses.

after three days, relapsed into his former sloth. Pompeian acquainted St. Benedict, who said, "I will go and correct "him myself." Such indeed was the danger and enormity of this fault, as to require the most effectual and speedy remedy. For it is only by assiduous prayer, that the soul is enriched with the abundance of the heavenly water of divine graces, which produces in her the plentiful fruit of all virtues. If we consider the example of all the saints, we shall see that prayer was the principal means by which the Holy Ghost sanctified their souls, and that they advanced in perfection, in proportion to their progress in the holy spirit of prayer. If this be neglected, the soul becomes spiritually barren, as a garden loses all its fruitfulness, and all its beauty, if the pump raises not up a continual supply of water, the principle of both. St. Benedict deploring the misfortune and blindness of this monk, hastened to his monastery, and coming to him at the end of the divine office, saw a little black boy leading him by the sleeve out of the church. After two days' prayer, St. Maurus saw the same; but Pompeian could not see this vision, by which was represented that the devil studies to withdraw men from prayer, in order that, being disarmed and defenceless, they may easily be made a prey. On the third day, St. Benedict finding the monk still absent from church in the time of prayer, struck him with a wand, and by that correction the sinner was freed from the temptation. Dom. German Millet,[1] tells us, from the tradition and archives of the monastery of St. Scholastica, that this happened in St. Jerom's. In the monastery of St. John, a fountain sprung up at the prayers of the saint; this, and two other monasteries, which were built on the summit of the mountain, being before much distressed for want of water. In that of St. Clement, situate on the bank of a lake, a Goth, who was a monk, let fall the head of a sickle into the water as he was cutting down thistles and weeds in order to make a garden; but St. Maur, who with St. Placidus lived in that house, holding the wooden handle in the water, the iron of its own accord swam, and joined it again, as St. Gregory relates. St. Benedict's reputation drew the most illustrious personages from Rom[illegible]

[1] See Dom. Mege, p. 84.

other remote parts to see him. Many, who came clad in purple, sparkling with gold and precious stones, charmed with the admirable sanctity of the servant of God, prostrated themselves at his feet to beg his blessing and prayers, and some, imitating the sacrifice of Abraham, placed their sons under his conduct in their most tender age, that they might be formed to perfect virtue from their childhood. Among others, two rich and most illustrious senators, Eutychius, or rather Equitius, and Tertullus, committed to his care their two sons, Maurus, then twelve years old, and Placidus, also a child, in 522.[c] The devil, envying so much good, stirred up his wicked instruments to disturb the tranquillity of the servant of God. Florentius, a priest in the neighbouring country, though unworthy to bear that sacred character, moved by a secret jealousy, persecuted the saint, and aspersed his reputation with grievous slanders. Bennet being a true disciple of Christ, knew no revenge but that of meekness and silence: and, not to inflame the envy of his adversary, left Sublacum, and repaired to Mount Cassino. He was not got far on his journey, when he heard that Florentius was killed by the fall of a gallery in which he was. The saint was much afflicted at his sudden and unhappy death, and enjoined Maurus a penance for calling it a deliverance from persecution.

Cassino is a small town, now in the kingdom of Naples, built on the brow of a very high mountain, on the top of which stood an old temple of Apollo, surrounded with a grove, in which certain idolaters still continued to offer their abominable sacrifices. The man of God having, by his preaching

[c] It has been related in the life of St. Maurus, how he walked on the water to save the life of Placidus, then a child, who, going to the lake to fetch water, had fallen in; for in monasteries no distinction was shewn to noblemen or their children, nor were they exempted from their share in manual labour, or other severities of the Rule. Such exemptions and privileges granted to many on pretence of health, first opened the door to a relaxation of monastic discipline. Placidus said, that when he was drawn by Maurus out of the water, he saw over his head the melotes of the abbot, and seemed to be saved by it, whence the miracle was by the disciples ascribed to St. Benedict. Dom Hæften thinks by the melotes is meant a cowl, to which that name is given by Paul the deacon, and the Roman Order or Ceremonial. But most understand an habit made of skins of goats, such as the Eastern monks wore, in imitation of the ancient prophets, as Cassian describes. (Instit. l. 1. c. 8.)

and miracles, converted many of them to the faith, broke the idol to pieces, overthrew the altar, demolished the temple, and cut down the grove. Upon the ruins of which temple and altar he erected two oratories or chapels; one bore the name of St. John the Baptist, the other of St. Martin. This was the origin of the celebrated abbey of Mount Cassino, the foundation of which the saint laid in 529, the forty-eighth year of his age, the third of the emperor Justinian; Felix IV. being pope, and Athalaric king of the Goths in Italy. The patrician, Tertullus, came about that time to pay a visit to the saint, and to see his son Placidus; and made over to this monastery several lands which he possessed in that neighbourhood, and also a considerable estate in Sicily. St. Bennet met on Mount Cassino, one Martin, a venerable old hermit, who, to confine himself to a more austere solitude, had chained himself to the ground in his cell, with a long iron chain. The holy abbot, fearing this singularity might be a mark of affectation, said to him: "If you are a servant of Jesus "Christ, let the chain of his love, not one of iron, hold you "fixed in your resolution." Martin gave proof of his humility by his obedience, and immediately laid aside his chain. St. Bennet governed also a monastery of nuns, situate near Mount Cassino, as is mentioned by St. Gregory: he founded an abbey of men at Terracina, and sent St. Placidus into Sicily to establish another in that island. Though ignorant of secular learning, he was eminently replenished with the spirit of God, and an experimental science of spiritual things: on which account he is said by St. Gregory the Great to have been "learnedly ignorant, and wisely unlettered."[d] For the alphabet of this great man is infinitely more desirable than all the empty science of the world, as St. Arsenius said of St. Antony. From certain very ancient pictures of St. Benedict and old inscriptions, Mabillon proves this saint to have been in holy orders, and a deacon.[2] Several moderns say he was a priest; but, as Muratori observes, without grounds. By the

[2] Annal. Bened. t. 5. p. 122. ad an. 543. See also Muratori, Script. Ital. t. 4. p. 217.

[d] Scienter nesciens, et sapienter indoctus.

account which St. Gregory has given us of his life, it appears that he preached sometimes in neighbouring places, and that a boundless charity opening his hand, he distributed amongst the needy all that he had on earth, to lay up his whole treasure in heaven. St. Bennet, possessing perfectly the science of the saints, and being enabled by the Holy Ghost to be the guide of innumerable souls in the most sublime paths of christian perfection, compiled a monastic rule, which, for wisdom and discretion, St. Gregory the Great preferred to all other rules; and which was afterward adopted, for some time, by all the monks of the West. It is principally founded on silence, solitude, prayer, humility, and obedience.[e]

[e] By it the abbot is charged with the entire government of the monastery. Seven hours a day are allotted the monks for manual labour, and two for pious reading, besides meditation from matins till break of day. But manual labour has been exchanged in most places for sacred studies and spiritual functions. The rule commands perpetual abstinence from flesh-meat, not only of four-footed animals, but also of fowls, which at that time were only served at the tables of princes as most exquisite dainties, as Mabillon shews from the testimony of St. Gregory of Tours. This law of abstinence is restored in the reformed congregation of St. Maur, and others. The hemina of wine allowed by St. Bennet per day, in countries where wine and water are only drank, has been the subject of many dissertations, this measure having not been the same at all times, nor in all countries. The Roman hemina, which was half a sextarius, contained ten ounces, as Montfaucon demonstrates, (Antiqu. expl. t. 3. l. 4. c. 7. p. 149. 152.) and as Mabillon allows. (Præf. in Sæc. 4.) Lancelot endeavours to shew, in a dissertation on this subject, that St. Bennet is to be understood of this Roman hemina. Menard takes it to have been only seven ounces and an half. Mabillon (Pr. in Sæc. 4. p. cxv.) and Martenne (in c. 40. Reg.) think the holy founder speaks not of the ordinary or Roman hemina, and understand him of the Grecian, which contained a pound and a half, or eighteen ounces. Calmet looks upon Lancelot's opinion as most probable. He shews from the clear tradition of Benedictin writers and monuments, that St. Benedict's hemina contained three glasses or draughts. See Calmet, (in c. 40. Reg. t. 2. p. 62.) But St. Benedict allows and commends a total abstinence from wine. The portion of bread allowed by this holy patriarch to each monk, was a pound and a half, or eighteen ounces a day, as it is explained by the famous council held at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the reign of Charlemagne.

The holy rule of St. Benedict, which the great Cosmus of Medicis, and other wise legislators, read frequently, in order to learn the maxims of perfect government, has been explained by a great number of learned and pious commentators, of whom Calmet gives a list. (t. 1. p. 1.) The principal amongst the moderns are Hæften, prior of Affligem, in twelve books of monastic disquisitions, &c. Steingelt, abbot of Anhusen, gave a judicious abridgment of this work. Dom. Menard has wrote upon this Rule in his Comments on the Concord of Rules of St. Benedict of Anian. Dom. Mege's Commentaires sur la Regle de St. Benoit, in 4to. printed at Paris in 1687, have been much blamed by his brethren for laxity. Dom. Martenne published with more applause his Commentarius in Regulam S. Benedicti, in 4to. in 1690. Son edition de la Regle est la plus exacte qu' on nous a donnè; et son Commentaire egalement judicieux et sçavant. Il ne parle pas de celui de Dom,

St. Bennet calls his Order a school in which men learn how to serve God: and his life was to his disciples a perfect model for their imitation, and a transcript of his rule. Being chosen by God, like another Moses, to conduct faithful souls into the true promised land, the kingdom of heaven, he was enriched with eminent supernatural gifts, even those of miracles and prophecy. He seemed like another Eliseus, endued by God with an extraordinary power, commanding all nature; and like the ancient prophets, foreseeing future events. He often raised the sinking courage of his monks, and baffled the various artifices of the devil with the sign of the cross, rendered the heaviest stone light in building his monastery by a short prayer, and, in presence of a multitude of people, raised to life a novice who had been crushed by the fall of a wall at Mount Cassino. He foretold, with many tears, that this monastery should be profaned and destroyed; which happened forty years after, when the Lombards demolished it about the year 580. He added, that he had scarce been able to obtain of God that the inhabitants should be saved.(f) It was strictly

Mege qui avoit parut trois ans avant le sien; parce que ses sentiments relachés sur la methode de pratiquer ou imposer des humiliations & sur plusieurs autres points ont scandalizés ses confreres, de sorte qu'en plusieurs monasteres reformés de cet ordre on ne le met pas entre les mains des jeunes religieux. Voyez le Cerf, Bibl. des Ecr. de la Congr. de St. Maur, p. 348. Hist. literaria Ord. St. Bened. t. 3. p. 21. Dom. Calmet printed in 1734, in two volumes, in 4to. Commentaire Literal Historique et Moral sur la Regle de St. Benoit, a work which, both for edification and erudition, is far superior to all the former, and is the masterpiece of this laborious writer, though not entirely exempt from little slips of memory, as when St. Cuthbert is called in it the founder of the monastery of Lindisfarne, (p. 18. t. 1.) The chief modern ascetical treatise on this subject is, La Regle de St. Benoit, traduite et expliquée par M. de Rancè, abbé de la Trappe, 2 vol. 4to. 1690, an excellent work for those who are bound to study, and imbibe the spirit of this holy Rule. It is reduced into meditations; which, as Calmet was informed by Mabillon, was done by a Benedictin nun. We have also Meditations on the Rule of St. Benedict, compiled by Dom. Morelle, author of many other works of piety and devotion. We have also very devout reflections on the prayers used in the religious profession of this Order, under the following title: Sentiments de Piete sur la Profession religieuse, par un religieux Benedictin de la Congregation de St. Maur. Dom. Berthelet of the Congregation of St. Vannes, proves abstinence from flesh, to have been anciently an essential duty of the monastic state, by an express book, entitled: Traite Historique & moral de l'abstinence de la viande, 1731.

(f) When the Lombards destroyed this famous abbey, in 580, St. Bennet, the abbot, escaped with all his monks to Rome, carrying with him only a copy of the Rule, written by St. Benedict himself, some of the habits which he and his sister St. Scholastica had wore, and the weight of the bread and measure of the wine which were the daily allowance for every monk.

forbid by the rule of St. Benedict, for any monk to eat out of his monastery, unless he was at such a distance that he

Pope Pelagius II. lodged these fathers near the Lateran church, where they built a monastery. In the pontificate of Gregory II. about the year 720, they were conducted back by abbot Petronax to Mount Cassino. This abbey was again ruined by the Saracens, in 884: also by the Normans in 1046, and by the emperor Frederic II. in 1239. But was as often rebuilt. It is at this day very stately, and the abbot exercises an episcopal jurisdiction over the town of San Germano, three little miles distant, and over twenty-one other parishes. The regular abbot of St. Scholastica at Subiaco, is temporal and spiritual lord of twenty-five villages. The Benedictins reckon in their Order, comprising all its branches and filiations, thirty-seven thousand houses. As to the number of emperors, kings, queens, princes, and princesses, who embraced this Order, and that of saints, popes, and writers of note, which it has given the church, see F. Helyot, Dom Mege, Calmet, and especially F. Ziegelbaver, Hist. Liter. Ord. S. Bened. 4 vol. folio. Aug. Vindel. An. 1754.

The monastic Order settled by St. Athanasius at Milan and Triers, during his banishment into the West; by St. Eusebius of Vercelli, in his diocess, and by St. Hilary and St. Martin in Gaul, was founded upon the plan of the Oriental monasteries; being brought by those holy prelates from Egypt and Syria. The same is to be said of the first monasteries founded in Great Britain and Ireland. After the coming of St. Columban from Ireland into France, his Rule continued long most in vogue, and was adopted by the greater part of the monasteries that flourished in that kingdom. But it was customary in those ages, for founders of great monasteries frequently to choose out of different Rules such religious practices and regulations, and to add such others as they judged most expedient: and the Benedictin Rule was sometimes blended with that of St. Columban or others. In the reigns of Charlemagne and Lewis the Debonnaire, for the sake of uniformity, it was enacted by the council of Aix-la-Chapelle in 802, and several other decrees, that the Rule of St. Benedict should alone be followed in all the monasteries in the dominions of those princes. F. Reyner, a most learned English Benedictin, in his Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia, has, with profound erudition, produced all the monuments and authorities by which it can be made to appear that St. Gregory the Great established the Rule of St. Benedict in his monastery of St. Andrew at Rome, and was settled by St. Austin and the other monks who were sent by St. Gregory to convert the English, in all the monasteries which they founded in this island. These proofs were abridged by Mabillon, Natalis Alexander, and others, who have judged that they amount to demonstration. Some however still maintain that the monastic Rule, brought hither by St. Austin, was a compilation from several different Rules: that St. Bennet Biscop, and soon after St. Wilfrid introduced several new regulations borrowed from the Rule of St. Benedict; that St. Dunstan established it in England more perfectly, still retaining several of the ancient constitutions of the English monasteries, and that it was not entirely adopted in England before Lanfranc's time. This opinion is warmly abetted by Dr. Ley, in his additions to Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire, and Tanner's Pref. to Notitia Monastica, in folio.

The Order of St. Benedict has branched out since the year 900, into several independent congregations, and the Orders of Camaldoli, Vallis Umbrosa, Fontevrault, the Gilbertins, Sylvestrins, Cistercians, and some others, are no more than reformations of the same, with certain particular additional constitutions.

Among the Reformations or distinct Congregations of Benedictins, the first is that of Cluni, so called from the great monastery of that name, in the diocess of Macon, founded by William the Pious, duke of Aquitian, about the year 910. St. Berno, the first abbot, his successor St. Odo, afterward St. Hugh, St. Odilo, St. Mayeul, Peter the Venerable, and

could not return home that day, and this rule, says St. Gregory, was inviolably observed. Indeed nothing more dangerously engages monks in the commerce of the world; nothing more enervates in them the discipline of abstinence and mortification, than for them to eat and drink with seculars abroad. St. Gregory tells us, that St. Bennet knew by revelation the fault of one of his monks who had accepted of an

other excellent abbots, exceedingly raised the reputation of this reform, and propagated the same. A second Reformation was established in this Congregation in 1621, by the Grand Prior de Veni, resembling those of St. Vanne and St. Maur. Those monks who would not adopt it in their houses, are called Ancient monks of Cluni. The Congregation of Cava was so called, from the great monastery of that name, in the province of Salerno, founded in 980, under the observance of Cluni: it was the head of a Congregation of twenty-nine other abbeys, and ninety-one conventual priories; but a bishopric being erected in the town of Cava, by Boniface IX. in 1394, and the abbot's revenue and temporal jurisdiction being united to it by Leo X. in 1514, the monastery of the Blessed Trinity of Cava was much diminished, but is still governed by a regular abbot. In 1485, it was united with all its dependencies to the Congregation of St. Justina and Mount Cassino. The church of St. Justina at Padua, was founded by the Consul Opilius, in the fifth century, and the great monastery of Benedictin monks was built there in the ninth. The Reformation which was established in this house by Lewis Barbus, a patrician of Venice, in 1409, was soon adopted by a great number of monasteries in Italy: but when in 1504 the abbey of Mount Cassino joined this Congregation, it took the name of this mother-house. The Congregation of Savigni, founded by St. Vitalis, a disciple of B. Robert of Arbrissel, in the forest of Savigni, in Normandy, in 1112, was united to the Cistercians in 1153. The Congregation of Tiron, founded by B. Bernard of Abbeville, another disciple of B. Robert of Arbrissel in 1109, in the forest of Tiron, in Le Perche. It passed into the Congregation of St. Maur, in 1629. These of Savigni and Tiron had formerly several houses in England. The Congregation of Bursfield in Germany, was established by a Reformation in 1461: that of Molck, vulgarly Melck, in Austria, in the diocess of Passaw, in 1418: that of Hirsauge, in the diocess of Spire, was instituted by St. William, abbot of S. Aurel, in 1080. The history of this abbey was wrote by Trithemius. After the change of religion it was secularized, and, by the treaty of Westphalia, ceded to the duke of Wirtemberg. The independent great Benedictin abbeys in Flanders, form a Congregation subject only to the Pope, but the abbots hold assemblies to judge appeals, in which the abbot of St. Vaast of Arras is president. The Congregation of Monte-Virgine, in Italy, was instituted by St. William, in 1119. That of St. Benedict's of Valladolid in Spain dates its establishment in 1390. In England, archbishop Lanfranc, united the Benedictin monasteries in one Congregation, which began from that time to hold regular general chapters, and for some time bore his name. This union was made stricter by many new regulations in 1335, under the name of the Black Monks. It is one of the most illustrious of all the Orders, or bodies of religious men, that have ever adorned the church, and in spite of the most grievous persecutions still subsists. The congregation of Benedictin nuns of Mount Calvary, owes its original to a Reformation, according to the primitive austerity of this Order, introduced first in the nunnery at Poitiers, in 1614, by the abbess Antoinette of Orleans, with the assistance of the famous F. Joseph, the capuchin. It has two houses at Paris, and eighteen others in several parts of France. See Helyot, t. 5 and 6. Calmet, Comment sur la Regle de St. Benoit, t. 2. p. 525. Hermant, Schoonbeck, &c.

invitation to take some refreshment when he was abroad on business.[3] A messenger who brought the saint a present of two bottles of wine, and had hid one of them, was put in mind by him to beware drinking of the other, in which he afterward found a serpent. One of the monks, after preaching to the nuns, had accepted of some handkerchiefs from them, which he hid in his bosom; but the saint, upon his return, reproved him for his secret sin against the rule of holy poverty. A novice, standing before him, was tempted with thoughts of pride on account of his birth: the saint discovered what passed in his soul, and bid him make the sign of the cross on his breast.

When Belisarius, the emperor's general, was recalled to Constantinople, Totila, the Arian king of the Goths, invaded and plundered Italy. Having heard wonders of the sanctity of St. Bennet, and of his predictions and miracles, he resolved to try whether he was really that wonderful man which he was reported to be. Therefore, as he marched through Campania, in 542, he sent the man of God word, that he would pay him a visit. But instead of going in person, he dressed one of his courtiers, named Riggo, in his royal purple robes, and sent him to the monastery, attended by the three principal lords of his court, and a numerous train of pages. St. Bennet, who was then sitting, saw him coming to his cell, and cried out to him at some distance: "Put off, my son, those robes "which you wear, and which belong not to you." The mock king, being struck with a panic for having attempted to impose upon the man of God, fell prostrate at his feet, together with all his attendants. The saint, coming up, raised him with his hand; and the officer returning to his master, related trembling what had befallen him. The king then went himself, but was no sooner come into the presence of the holy abbot, but he threw himself on the ground, and continued prostrate till the saint, going to him, obliged him to rise. The holy man severely reproved him for the outrages he had committed, and said: "You do a great deal of mischief, and I "foresee you will do more. You will take Rome: you will

[3] St. Greg. Dial. l. 2. c. 12. Dom Mege, p. 180.

" cross the sea, and will reign nine years longer: but death " will overtake you in the tenth, when you shall be arraigned " before a just God to give an account of your conduct." All which came to pass as St. Benedict had foretold him. Totila was seized with fear, and recommended himself to his prayers. From that day the tyrant became more humane; and when he took Naples, shortly after, treated the captives with greater lenity than could be expected from an enemy and a barbarian.[4] When the bishop of Canusa afterward said to the saint, that Totila would leave Rome a heap of stones, and that it would be no longer inhabited, he answered: " No: but it " shall be beaten with storms and earthquakes, and shall be " like a tree which withers by the decay of its root." Which prediction St. Gregory observes to have been accomplished.

The death of this great saint seems to have happened soon after that of his sister St. Scholastica, and in the year after his interview with Totila. He foretold it his disciples, and caused his grave to be opened six days before. When this was done he fell ill of a fever, and on the sixth day would be carried into the chapel, where he received the body and blood of our Lord,[g] and having given his last instructions to his sorrowful disciples, standing and leaning on one of them, with his hands lifted up, he calmly expired, in prayer, on Saturday, the twenty-first of March, probably in the year 543, and of his age the sixty-third; having spent fourteen years at Mount Cassino. The greatest part of his relicks remains still in that abbey; though some of his bones were brought into France, about the close of the seventh century, and deposited in the famous abbey of Fleury, which, on that account, has long borne the name of St. Bennet's on the Loire.[h] It was founded

[4] Procop. l. 3. de Bello Gothico. Baronius, &c.

[g] Exitum suum Dominici corporis et sanguinis perceptione communivit. Saint Greg. Dial. b. 2. c. 37.

[h] Some have related that Aigulph, a monk of Fleury, and certain citizens from Mans, going to Mount Cassino in 653, when that monastery lay in ruins, brought thence the remains of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, and placed those of the former at Fleury, and those of the latter at Mans. The author of this relation is either Adrevald or rather Adalbert, a monk of Fleury, whom some imagined cotemporary with Aigulph, but he certainly lived at least two hundred years later, as he himself declares, and his account is in many capital circumstances inconsistent with those of the life of Ai-

in the reign of Clovis II. about the year 640, and belongs at present to the congregation of St. Maur.

St. Gregory, in two words, expresses the characteristical virtue of this glorious patriarch of the monastic Order, when he says, that, returning from Vicovara to Sublaco, he dwelt alone with himself;[5] which words comprise a great and rare perfection, in which consists the essence of holy retirement. A soul dwells not in true solitude, unless this be interior as well as exterior, and unless she cultivates no acquaintance

[5] Habitavit secum.

gulph, and with the authentic and certain history of that age, as is demonstrated by F. Stilting the Bollandist, in the life of St. Aigulph, (t. 1. Sept. p. 744.) and by others. It is printed in the Bibliotheca Floriacensis, (or of Fleury) t. 1. p. 1. and more correctly in Mabillon's Acta Ben. t. 2. p. 337. and the Bollandists, 21 Martij, p. 300. Soon after this relation was compiled by Adalbert, we find it quoted by Adrevald, a monk of the same house, in his history of several miracles wrought by the relicks of this holy patriarch. (See Dom Clemencez, Hist. Liter. t. 5. p. 516.) This Adrevald wrote also the life of St. Aigulph, who, passing from Fleury to Lerins, and being made abbot of that house, established there an austere reformation of the Order: but by the contrivance of certain rebellious monks joined in a conspiracy with the count of Usez, and some other powerful men, was seized by violence, and carried to the isle Caprasia (now called Capraia) situated between Corsica and the coast of Tuscany, where he was murdered with three companions, about the year 676, on the third day of September, on which he is honoured as a martyr at Lerins. The relicks of these martyrs were honourably conveyed thither soon after their death. F. Vincent Barrali, in his history of Lerins, affirms that they still remain there; but this can be only true of part, for the body of St. Aigulph was translated to the Benedictin priory at Provins, in the diocess of Sens, and is to this day honoured there, as Mabillon (Sæc. 2. Ben. p. 666 & 742.) and Stilting (t. 1. Sept.) demonstrate, from the constant tradition of that monastery, and the authority of Peter Cellensis and several other irrefragable vouchers.

That the greatest part at least of the relicks of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica still remain at Mount Cassino, is demonstrated by Angelus de Nuce, in his dissertation on this subject, by F. Stilting, in his comments on the life of St. Aigulph, t. 1. Sept. by pope Benedict XIV. De Servor. Dei Beatif. & Canoniz. l. 4. part. 2. c. 24. n. 53. t. 5. p. 245. and Macchiarelli, the monk of Camaldoli. Soon after Mount Cassino was restored, pope Zachary visited that monastery, and devoutly venerated the relicks of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica in 746, as he testifies in his Bull. When pope Alexander II. consecrated the new church of that abbey in 1071, these sacred bones were inspected, and found all to remain there, as we learn from his Bull, and by Leo of Ostia, and Peter the deacon. The same is affirmed in the acts of two visitations made of them in 1545 and 1659. Nevertheless, Angelus de Nuce (who relates in his Chronicle of Mount Cassino, that, in 1659, he saw these relicks, with all the monks of that house, in the visitation then made) and Stilting allow that some of the bones of this saint were conveyed into France, not by St. Aigulph, but soon after his time; and this is expressly affirmed by Paul the deacon, in his history of the Lombards, l. 6. c. 2.

but with God and herself, admitting no other company. Many dwell in monasteries, or alone, without possessing the secret of living with themselves. Though they are removed from the conversation of the world, their minds still rove abroad, wandering from the consideration of God and themselves, and dissipated amidst a thousand exterior objects which their imagination presents to them, and which they suffer to captivate their hearts, and miserably entangle their will with vain attachments and foolish desires. Interior solitude requires the silence of the interior faculties of the soul, no less than of the tongue and exterior senses: without this, the inclosure of walls is a very weak fence. In this interior solitude, the soul collects all her faculties within herself, employs all her thoughts on herself and on God, and all her strength and affections in aspiring after him. Thus, St. Benedict dwelt with himself, being always busied in the presence of his Creator, in bewailing the spiritual miseries of his soul and past sins, in examining into the disorders of his affections, in watching over his senses, and the motions of his heart, and in a constant attention to the perfection of his state, and the contemplation of divine things. This last occupied his soul in the sweet exercises of divine love and praise; but the first mentioned exercises, or the consideration of himself and of his own nothingness and miseries, laid the foundation by improving in him continually the most profound spirit of humility and compunction. The twelve degrees of humility, which he lays down in his Rule,[6] are commended by St. Thomas Aquinas.[7] The first is a deep compunction of heart, and holy fear of God and his judgments, with a constant attention to walk in the divine presence, sunk under the weight of this confusion and fear. 2. The perfect renunciation of our own will. 3. Ready obedience. 4. Patience under all sufferings and injuries. 5. The manifestation of our thoughts and designs to our superior or director. 6. To be content, and to rejoice, in all humiliations; to be pleased with mean employments, poor clothes, &c. to love simplicity and poverty, (which he will have among monks, to be

[6] S. Bened. Reg. c. 7.—[7] S. Thos. 2. 2. qu. 161. a. 6.

extended even to the ornaments of the altar) and to judge ourselves unworthy, and bad servants in every thing that is enjoined us. 7. Sincerely to esteem ourselves baser and more unworthy than every one, even the greatest sinners.(1) 8. To avoid all love of singularity in words or actions. 9. To love and practice silence. 10. To avoid dissolute mirth and loud laughter. 11. Never to speak with a loud voice, and to be modest in our words. 12. To be humble in all our exterior actions, by keeping our eyes humbly cast down with the publican,(8) and the penitent Manasses.(9) St. Benedict adds, that divine love is the sublime recompense of sincere humility, and promises, upon the warrant of the divine word, that God will raise that soul to perfect charity, which, faithfully walking in these twelve degrees, shall have happily learned true humility. Elsewhere he calls obedience with delay, the first degree of humility,(10) but means the first among the exterior degrees; for he places before it interior compunction of soul, and the renunciation of our own will.

ST. SERAPION,

Called the Sindonite, from a single garment of coarse linen which he always wore. He was a native of Egypt. Exceeding great was the austerity of his penitential life. Though he travelled into several countries, he always lived in the same poverty, mortification, and recollection. In a certain town, commiserating the spiritual blindness of an idolater, who was also a comedian, he sold himself to him for twenty pieces of

(8) Luke xviii. 13.—(9) Orat. ejus inter Apocryph.—(10) St. Bened. Reg. c. 5. p. 210.

(1) No one can, without presumption, pride and sin, prefer himself before the worst of sinners, first, because the judgments of God are always secret and unknown to us, (See St. Aug. de Virginit. St. Thos. 2. 2. qu. 161. ad. 1. Cassian, St. Bern. &c.) secondly, The greatest sinners had they received the graces with which we have been favoured, would not have been so ungrateful; and if we had been in their circumstances, into what precipices should not we have fallen? thirdly, Instead of looking upon notorious sinners, we ought to turn our eyes toward those who serve God with fervour, full of confusion to see how far so many thousands are superior to us in every virtue. Thus we must practise the lesson laid down by St. Paul, never to measure ourselves with any one so as to prefer ourselves to another; but to look upon all others as superior to us, and less ungrateful and base than ourselves. Our own wretchedness and sinfulness we are acquainted with but charity inclines us to judge the best of others.

money. His only sustenance in this servitude was bread and water. He acquitted himself at the same time of every duty belonging to his condition with the utmost diligence and fidelity, joining with his labour assiduous prayer and meditation. Having converted his master and the whole family to the faith, and induced him to quit the stage, he was made free by him, but could not be prevailed upon to keep for his own use, or even to distribute to the poor, the twenty pieces, of coin he had received as the price of his liberty. Soon after this he sold himself a second time, to relieve a distressd widow. Having spent some time with his new master, in recompense of signal spiritual services, besides his liberty, he also received a cloak, a tunick or under-garment, and a book of the gospels. He was scarce gone out of doors, when meeting a poor man he bestowed on him his cloak; and shortly after to another starving with cold, he gave his tunick; and was thus reduced again to his single linen garment. Being asked by a stranger, who it was that had stript him and left him in that naked condition, shewing his book of the gospels, he said: "This it is "that hath stripped me." Not long after, he sold the book itself for the relief of a person in extreme distress. Being met by an old acquaintance, and asked what was become of it, he said: "Could you believe it? This gospel seemed continually "to cry to me: Go, sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor. "Wherefore I have also sold it, and given the price to the "indigent members of Christ." Having nothing now left but his own person, he disposed of that again on several other occasions, where the corporal or spiritual necessities of his neighbour called for relief: once to a certain Manichee at Lacedæmon, whom he served for two years, and before they were expired brought both him and his whole family over to the true faith. St. John the Almoner having read the particulars of this history, called for his steward, and said to him weeping: "Can we flatter ourselves that we do any great "matters because we give our estates to the poor? Here is "a man who could find means to give himself to them, and so "many times over." St. Serapion went from Lacedæmon to Rome, there to study the most perfect models of virtue, and returning afterward into Egypt, died in the desert, being

sixty years old, some time before Palladius visited Egypt in 388. Henschenius in his Notes on the life of St. Auxentius[1] and Bollandus[2] take notice that in certain Menæa he is honoured on the twenty-first of March; yet they have not given his acts on that day. Baronius confounds him with St. Serapion the Sidonian martyr. See Pallad. Lausiac. ch. 83. and Leontius in the life of St. John the Almoner.

ST. SERAPION,

Abbot of Arsinoe, in Upper Egypt. He governed ten thousand monks dispersed in the deserts and monasteries near that town. These religious men hired themselves to the farmers of the country to till their lands and reap their corn; joining assiduous prayer and other exercises of their state with their labour. Each man received for his wages twelve artabes, or about forty Roman bushels or modii, says Palladius: all which they put into the hands of their holy abbot. He gave to every one a sufficient allowance for his subsistence during the ensuing year, according to their abstemious manner of living. The remainder was all distributed among the poor. By this economy, all the necessities of the indigent in that country were supplied, and several barges loaded with corn were sent yearly by the river to Alexandria, for the relief of the poor of that great city. St. Serapion was honoured with the priesthood, and with admirable sanctity applied himself to the sacred functions of the ministry: yet found time to join his brethren in their penitential labour, not to lose his share in their charity. His name is inserted by Canisius in his Germanic Martyrology on this day, from certain copies of the Greek Menæa. See Palladius, c. 76. p. 760. Rufin. Vit. Patr. l. 2. c. 18. Sozomen, l. 6. c. 28.

ST. SERAPION, BISHOP OF THMUIS IN EGYPT, C.

The surname of the Scholastic, which was given him, is a proof of the reputation which he acquired, by his penetrating

[1] Henschen. Not. in Vit. S. Auxentii, ad 24 Febr. t. 3. Febr.—[2] Bolland. ad 23 Jan. p. 508. t. 2. Jan.

genius, and by his extensive learning, both sacred and profane. He presided for some time in the catechetical school of Alexandria, but, to apply himself more perfectly to the science of the saints, to which he had always consecrated himself, his studies, and his other actions, he retired into the desert, and became a bright light in the monastic state. St. Athanasius assures us, in his life of St. Anthony, that in the visits which Serapion paid to that illustrious patriarch, St. Antony, often told on his mountain, things which passed in Egypt at a distance; and that at his death, he left him one of his tunicks of hair. St. Serapion was drawn out of his retreat, to be placed in the episcopal see of Thmuis, a famous city of Lower Egypt, near Diospolis, to which Stephanus and Ptolemy, give the title of a metropolis. The name in the Egyptian tongue signified a goat, which animal was anciently worshipped there, as St. Jerom informs us. St. Serapion was closely linked with St. Athanasius, in the defence of the catholic faith, for which he was banished by the emperor Constantius; whence St. Jerom styles him a confessor. Certain persons, who confessed God, the Son consubstantial to the Father, denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost. This error was no sooner broached, but our saint strenuously opposed it, and informed St. Athanasius of this new inconsistent blasphemy; and that zealous defender of the adorable mystery of the Trinity, the fundamental article of the christian faith, against this rising monster. The four letters, which St. Athanasius wrote to Serapion, in 359, out of the desert, in which at that time he lay concealed, were the first express confutation of the Macedonian heresy, that was published. St. Serapion ceased not to employ his labours to great advantage, against both the Arians and Macedonians. He also compiled an excellent book against the Manichees, in which he shews that our bodies may be made the instruments of good, and that our souls may be perverted by sin; that there is no creature of which a good use may not be made; and that both just and wicked men are often changed, the former by falling into sin, the latter by becoming virtuous. It is therefore a self-contradiction to pretend with the Manichees that our souls are the work of God, but our bodies of the

devil, or the evil principle.[a] St. Serapion wrote several learned letters, and a treatise on the Titles of the Psalms, quoted by St. Jerom, which are now lost. At his request, St. Athanasius composed several of his works against the Arians; and so great was his opinion of our saint, that he desired him to correct, or add to them, what he thought wanting. Socrates relates[1] that St. Serapion gave an abstract of his own life, and an abridged rule of christian perfection, in very few words, which he would often repeat, saying; "The mind is purified by spiritual knowledge, (or by holy "meditation and prayer) the spiritual passions of the soul "by charity, and the irregular appetites by abstinence and "penance." This saint died in his banishment in the fourth age, and is commemorated on this day in the Roman Martyrology. See his works, those of St. Athanasius in several places, St. Jerom, Catal. c. 99. Socrates, l. 4. c. 23. Sozom. l. 4. c. 9. Photius, Cod. 85. Tillem. t. 8. Ceillier, t. 6. p. 36.

ST. ENNA, OR ENDEUS, ABBOT.

His father Conall Deyre, was lord of Ergall, a large territory in Ulster, in which principality Enna succeeded him: but by the pious exhortations of his sister, St. Fanchea, abbess of Kill-Aine, at the foot of mount Bregh, in the confines of Meath, he left the world, and became a monk. Going abroad by her advice, he lived some time in the abbey of Rosnal, or the Vale of Ross, under the abbot Mansenus. At length returning home, he obtained of Ængus, king of Munster, a grant of the isle of Arra, or Arn, wherein he foundeda great monastery, in which he trained up many disciples, illustrious for sanctity, insomuch that the island was called Arran of the Saints. His death must have happened in the beginning of the sixth century. The chief church of the island is dedi-

[1] Socrat. hist. l. 4. c. 23.

[a] A Latin translation of St. Serapion's book against the Manichees, given by F. Turrianus the Jesuit, is published in the Bibliotheca Patrum, printed at Lyons, and in F. Canisius's Lectiones Antiquæ. t. 5. part 1. p. 35. The learned James Basnage, who republished this work of Canisius, with curious additions and notes, has added the Greek text, t. 1. p. 37.

cated to God in his name, and called Kill-Enda. His tomb is shewn in the church-yard of another church, in the same island, named Teglach-Enda. See F. Colgan, March 21.

MARCH XXII.

ST. BASIL OF ANCYRA, PRIEST, M.

From the authentic acts of his martyrdom in Ruinart, Henschenius, and Tillemont, t. 7. p. 375.

A. D. 362.

Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra, distinguished himself by his zeal against the Arians, on which account he was banished by Constantius in 336.[a] Basil, a ringleader of the Semi-Arians, was intruded into that see, but was himself deposed by the stanch Arians, in 360; and is mentioned by Socrates to have survived our saint, though he continued still in ba-

[a] Marcellus wrote a famous book against the Arians, which Eusebius of Cæsarea and all the Arians condemned, as reviving the exploded heresy of Sabellius. But Sabellianism was a general slander with which they aspersed all orthodox pastors. It is indeed true, that St. Hilary, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, and Sulpicius Severus charge Marcellus with that error; but were deceived by the clamours of the Arians. For Marcellus appealing to pope Julius, and repairing to Rome, was acquitted, and his book declared orthodox by that pope in 341, and also by the council of Sardica in 347; as St. Hilary (fragm. 3. p. 1308. 1311.) and St. Athanasius (Apol. contra Arianos, p. 165.) testify. It was a calumny of the Arians, though believed by St. Hilary, that St. Athanasius at length abandoned and condemned him. It is demonstrated by Dom. Montfaucon from the works of St. Athanasius, that he ever defended the innocence of Marcellus. (T. 2. Collect. Patr.) Moreover, Marcellus being informed, that St. Basil had suggested to St. Athanasius certain suspicions of his faith, in 372, towards the end of his life, sent to St. Athanasius his most orthodox confession of faith, in which he explicitly condemns Sabellianism; which authentic monument was published by Montfaucon. (t. 2. Collect. Patr. p. 55.) If Patavius, Bull, and others, who censure Marcellus, had seen this confession, they would have cleared him of the imputation of Sabellianism, and expounded favourably certain ambiguous expressions which occurred in his book against the Arians, which is now lost, and was compiled against a work of Asterius the Sophist, surnamed the Advocate of the Arians.

nishment under Jovian. The holy martyr of whom we speak was also called Basil. He was priest of Ancyra under the bishop Marcellus, and a man of a most holy life, and unblemished conversation, and had been trained up by saints in the practices of perfect piety. He preached the word of God with great assiduity, and when the Arian wolf, who bore his name, attempted to plant his heresy in that city, he never ceased to cry out to the people, with the zeal and intrepidity of a prophet, exhorting them to beware of the snares which were laid for them, and to remain steadfast in the catholic faith. He was forbidden by the Arian bishops, in 360, to hold ecclesiastical assemblies: but he despised the unjust order; and as boldly defended the catholic faith before Constantius himself. When Julian the Apostate re-established idolatry, and left no means untried to pervert the faithful, Basil ran through the whole city, exhorting the Christians to continue steadfast, and not pollute themselves with the sacrifices and libations of the heathens, but fight manfully in the cause of God. The heathens laid violent hands on him, and dragged him before Saturninus the proconsul, accusing him of sedition, of having overturned altars, that he stirred up the people against the gods, and had spoken irreverently of the emperor and his religion. The proconsul asked him if the religion which the emperor had established was not the truth? The martyr answered: "Can you yourself believe "it? Can any man endued with reason persuade himself "that dumb statues are gods?" The proconsul commanded him to be tortured on the rack, and scoffing, said to him, under his torments: "Do not you believe the power of the "emperor to be great, who can punish those who disobey "him? Experience is an excellent master, and will inform "you better. Obey the emperor, worship the gods, and offer "sacrifice." The martyr who prayed during his torments, with great earnestness, replied: "It is what I never will do." The proconsul remanded him to prison, and informed his master Julian of what he had done. The emperor approved of his proceedings, and dispatched Elpidius and Pegasus, two apostate courtiers, in quality of commissaries, to assist the proconsul in the trial of the prisoner. They took with them

from Nicomedia one Asclepius, a wicked priest of Esculapius, and arrived at Ancyra. Basil did not cease to praise and glorify God in his dungeon, and Pegasus repaired thither to him in hopes, by promises and entreaties, to work him into compliance: but came back to the proconsul highly offended at the liberty with which the martyr had reproached him with his apostacy. At the request of the commissaries, the proconsul ordered him to be again brought before them, and tormented on the rack with greater cruelty than before; and afterward to be loaded with the heaviest irons, and lodged in the deepest dungeon.

In the mean time Julian set out from Constantinople for Antioch, in order to prepare for his Persian expedition. From Chalcedon he turned out of his road to Pessinunte, a town in Galatia, there to offer sacrifice in a famous temple of Cibele. In that town he condemned a certain Christian to be beheaded for the faith, and the martyr went to execution with as much joy as if he had been called to a banquet. When Julian arrived at Ancyra, St. Basil was presented before him, and the crafty emperor, putting on an air of compassion, said to him: "I myself am well skilled in your mysteries; and I can inform you, that Christ, in whom you place your trust, died under Pilate, and remains among the dead." The martyr answered: "You are deceived who have renounced Christ, at a time when he conferred on you the empire. But he will deprive you of it, together with your life. As you have thrown down his altars, so will he overturn your throne: and as you have violated his holy law, which you had so often announced to the people (when a Reader in the church) and have trodden it under your feet, your body shall be cast forth without the honour of a burial, and shall be trampled upon by men." Julian replied: "I designed to dismiss thee: but thy impudent manner of rejecting my advice, and uttering reproaches against me, force me to use thee ill. It is therefore my command, that every day thy skin be torn off thee in seven different places till thou hast no more left." He then gave it in charge to count Frumentinus, the captain of his guards, to see this barbarous sentence executed. The

saint, after having suffered with wonderful patience the first incisions, desired to speak to the emperor. Frumentinus would be himself the bearer of this message to Julian, not doubting but Basil intended to comply and offer sacrifice. Julian instantly ordered that the confessor should meet him in the temple of Esculapius. He there pressed him to join him in offering sacrifices. But the martyr replied, that he could never adore blind and deaf idols. And taking a piece of his flesh which had been cut out of his body that day, and still hung to it by a bit of skin, he threw it upon Julian. The emperor went out in great indignation: and count Frumentinus, fearing his displeasure, studied how to revenge an insult, for which he seemed responsible to his master. He therefore mounted his tribunal, and ordered the torments of the martyr to be redoubled; and so deep were the incisions made in his flesh, that his bowels were exposed to view, and the spectators wept for compassion. The martyr prayed aloud all the time, and at evening was carried back to prison. Next morning Julian set out for Antioch, and would not see Frumentinus. The count resolved to repair his disgrace, or at least to discharge his resentment by exerting his rage upon the servant of Christ. But to his thundering threats Basil answered: "You know how many pieces of flesh have been "torn from my body: yet look on my shoulders and sides: "see if any wounds appear? Know that Jesus Christ this "night hath healed me. Send this news to your master "Julian, that he may know the power of God whom he hath "forsaken. He hath overturned his altars, who was himself "concealed under them when he was sought by Constantius "to be put to death. But God hath discovered to me that "his tyranny shall be shortly extinguished with his life." Frumentinus seemed no longer able to contain his rage, and commanded the saint to be laid upon his belly, and his back to be pierced with red-hot-iron spikes. The martyr expired under these torments on the twenty-ninth of June, in 362. But his name is honoured both by the Latins and Greeks on the twenty-second of March.

The love of God, which triumphed in the breasts of the

martyrs, made them regard as nothing whatever labours, losses, or torments they suffered for its sake, according to that of the Canticles: *If a man shall have given all that he possesses, he will despise it as nothing.* If the sacrifice of worldly honours, goods, friends, and life be required of such a one, he makes it with joy, saying with the Royal Prophet, *What have I desired in heaven, or on earth, besides thee, O God! Thou art my portion for ever.* If he lives deprived of consolation and joy, in interior desolation and spiritual dryness, he is content to bear his cross, provided he be united to his God by love, and says, My God and my all, if I possess you, I have all things in you alone: whatever happens to me, with the treasure of your love I am rich and sovereignly happy. This he repeats in poverty, disgraces, afflictions, and persecutions. He rejoices in them, as by them he is more closely united to his God, gives the strongest proof of his fidelity to him, and perfect submission to his divine appointments, and adores the accomplishment of his will. If it be the property of true love, to receive crosses with content and joy, to sustain great labours, and think them small, or rather not to think of them at all, as they bear no proportion to the prize, to what we owe to God, or to what his love deserves: to suffer much, and think all nothing, and the longest and severest trials short: is it not a mark of a want of this love, to complain of prayer, fasts, and every Christian duty? how far is this disposition from the fervour and resolution of all the saints, and from the heroic courage of the martyrs?

ST. PAUL, BISHOP OF NARBONNE, C.

St. Gregory of Tours informs us,[1] that he was sent with other preachers from Rome to plant the faith in Gaul. St. Saturninus of Thoulouse, and St. Dionysius of Paris, were crowned with martyrdom: but St. Paul of Narbonne, Saint Trophimus of Arles, St. Martial of Limoges, and St. Gatian of Tours, after having founded those churches, amidst many dangers, departed in peace. Prudentius says,[2] that the name of Paul had rendered the city of Narbonne illustrious.

[1] Hist. Franc. l. 1. c. 30.—[2] Hymn. 4.

S. LEA, WIDOW.

She was a rich Roman lady; after the death of her husband she mortified her flesh by wearing rough sack-cloth, passed whole nights in prayer, and by humility seemed every one's menial servant. She died in 384, and is honoured on this day in the Roman Martyrology. St. Jerom makes an elegant comparison between her death and that of Prætextatus, a heathen, who was that year appointed consul, but snatched away by death at the same time. See St. Jerom, Ep. 20. (olim. 24.) to Marcella, t. 4. p. 51. Ed. Ben.

ST. DEOGRATIAS, BISHOP OF CARTHAGE, C.

Genseric, the Arian king of the Vandals, took Carthage in 439, filled the city with cruelties, and caused Quodvultdeus, the bishop, and many others, to be put on board an old leaky vessel, who notwithstanding arrived safe at Naples. After a vacancy of fourteen years, in 454, St. Deogratias was consecrated archbishop. Two years after, Genseric plundered Rome, and brought innumerable captives from Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, into Africa, whom the Moors and Vandals shared among them on the shore, separating without any regard or compassion weeping wives from their husbands, and children from their parents. Deogratias sold every thing, even the gold and silver vessels of the church to redeem as many as possible; he provided them with lodgings and beds, and furnished them with all succours, and though in a decrepit old age, visited those that were sick every day, and often in the night. Worn out by these fatigues, he died in 457, to the inexpressible grief of the prisoners, and of his own flock. The ancient calendar of Carthage, written in the fifth age, commemorates him on the fifth of January; but the Roman on the twenty-second of March. See St. Victor Vitensis, l. 1. c. 3.

ST. CATHARINE OF SWEDEN, VIRGIN.

She was daughter of Ulpho, prince of Nèricia in Sweden, and of St. Bridget. The love of God seemed almost to prevent in her the use of her reason. At seven years of age she was placed in the nunnery of Risberg, and educated in piety under the care of the holy abbess of that house. Being very beautiful, she was, by her father, contracted in marriage to Egard, a young nobleman of great virtue: but the virgin persuaded him to join with her in making a mutual vow of perpetual chastity. By her discourses he became desirous only of heavenly graces, and, to draw them down upon his soul more abundantly, he readily acquiesced in the proposal. The happy couple, having but one heart and one desire, by a holy emulation excited each other to prayer, mortification, and works of charity. After the death of her father, St. Catharine, out of devotion to the passion of Christ, and to the relicks of the martyrs, accompanied her mother in her pilgrimages and practices of devotion and penance. After her death at Rome, in 1373, Catharine returned to Sweden, and died abbess of Vadzstena, or Vatzen,[a] on the twenty-fourth of March, in 1381.[b] For the last twenty-five years of her life she every day purified her soul by a sacramental confession of her sins. Her name stands in the Roman Martyrology on the twenty-second of March. See her life written by Ulpho, a Brigittine friar, thirty years after her death, with the remarks of Henschenius.

[a] The great monastery of our Saviour at Wasten, or Vatzen, in the diocess of Lincopen, was first founded by St. Bridget, in 1344; but rebuilt in a more convenient situation in 1384, when the nuns and friars were introduced with great solemnity by the bishop of Lincopen. This is called its foundation in the exact chronicle of Sweden, published by Benzelius. Monum. Suec. p. 94.

[b] St. Catharine of Sweden compiled a pious book, entitled Sielinna Troëst, that is, Consolation of the Soul, which fills one hundred and sixty-five leaves in folio, in a MS. on vellum, mentioned by Stiernman, Sur l'etat des Sciences en Suede, dans les temps reculés. The saint modestly says in her preface, that as a bee gathers honey out of various flowers, and a physician makes choice of medicinal roots for the composition of his remedies, and a virgin makes up a garland out of a variety of flowers, so she has collected from the holy scriptures and other good books, chosen rules, and maxims of virtue.

MARCH XXIII.

SAINT ALPHONSUS TURIBIUS,

ARCHBISHOP OF LIMA, CONFESSOR.

From his life by F. Cyprian de Herrera, dedicated to pope Clement X. and the acts of his canonization.

A. D. 1606.

St. Toribio, or Turibius Alphonsus Mogrobejo, was second son to the lord of Mogrobejo, and born in the kingdom of Leon, on the sixteenth of November, in 1538. From his infancy he discovered a strong inclination to piety; and, in his childhood, it was his delight, at times of recreation, to erect and adorn altars, and to serve the poor. He trembled at the very shadow of sin. One day, seeing a poor pedlar woman angry because she had lost something out of her pack, he most movingly entreated and exhorted her, that she would not offend God by passion; and, in order to appease her, gave her the value of her loss, which he had begged of his mother for that purpose. He was very devout to the Blessed Virgin, said every day her Office and Rosary, and fasted every Saturday in her honour. Whilst at school, he usually gave part of his slender dinner to the poor, and was so much addicted to fasting, that his superiors were obliged, by strict commands, to compel him to moderate his austerities. He began his higher studies at Valladolid, but completed them at Salamanca. He was introduced early to the notice of king Philip II. honoured by him with several dignities, and made president or chief judge at Granada. This office he discharged during five years with so much integrity, prudence, and virtue, that the eyes of the whole kingdom were fixed on him, and his life in the world was a holy noviceship to the

pastoral charge. The pressing necessities of the infant church of Peru required a prelate who inherited, in a distinguished manner, the spirit of the apostles; and the archbishopric of Lima falling vacant, Turibius was unanimously judged the person of all others the best qualified to be an apostle of so large a country, and to remedy the scandals which obstructed the conversion of the infidels. The king readily nominated him to that dignity, and all parties concerned applauded the choice. Turibius was thunderstruck at this unexpected news, and had no sooner received the message, but he cast himself on the ground at the foot of his crucifix, praying with many tears that God would deliver him from so heavy a burden, which he thought absolutely above his strength. He wrote the most urgent letters to the king's council, in which he pleaded his incapacity, and other impediments, and laid great stress on the canons which forbid laymen to be promoted to such dignities in the church. This humility it was that obtained the succour of heaven by which he performed wonders in the service of souls. Being compelled by obedience to acquiesce, he at length testified his submission by falling on his knees and kissing the ground.

After a suitable preparation, he received the four minor orders on four successive Sundays, the better to dispose himself for the functions of each; and after passing through the other orders he was consecrated bishop. Immediately after which he set out for Peru, and landed at Lima, in the year 1581, of his age the forty-third. That diocess is extended one hundred and thirty leagues along the coast, comprising three cities, and many towns and villages, with innumerable cottages scattered over two ridges of the mountains of the Andes, esteemed the highest and the most rugged in the whole world. Some of the European generals, who first invaded that country, were men who seemed to measure every thing by their insatiable avarice and ambition, and had so far lost all sentiments of humanity towards the poor savages, that they deserved the name rather of tyrants and plunderers than of conquerors. Civil wars and dissentions completed the misfortune of that country; and covetousness, cruelty, trea-

chery, fraud, and debauchery seemed triumphant. Nor were the repeated orders of the Spanish court able to redress these evils. The sight of these disorders moved the good pastor often to tears, but his prudence and zeal overcame all difficulties, extirpated public scandals, and made that kingdom a flourishing portion of the christian church. Upon his arrival he immediately began a visitation of his vast diocess: an undertaking of incredible fatigue, and attended with many dangers. He often crept over the steepest and most rugged mountains, covered with ice or snow, to visit some poor hut of Indians, and give them suitable comfort and instruction. He travelled often on foot, and sometimes barefoot, and by fasting and prayer never ceased to implore the divine mercy for the salvation of the souls committed to his charge. He placed every where able and zealous pastors, and took care that no one in the most remote corners of the rocks should be left destitute of the means of instruction and of the benefit of the sacraments. To settle and maintain discipline, he appointed diocesan synods to be held every two years, and provincial synods every seven; and was vigilant and severe in chastising the least scandal, especially of avarice, in the clergy. Without respect of persons, he reproved injustices and vice, and made use of all the means which his authority put into his hands, to check the insolence of public sinners, and to protect the poor from oppression. Many of the first conquerors and governors of Peru, before the arrival of the most virtuous viceroy Francis of Toledo, were men who often sacrificed every thing to their passions, and for their private ends. From some of these the saint suffered many persecutions, and was often thwarted by them in the discharge of his duty. But by the arms of meekness and patience he overcame all affronts and injuries, and with an invincible constancy he maintained the rights of justice and truth. He shewed that many sinners misconstrued the law of God to make it favour their passions; but that, as Tertullian observes, "Christ calls himself the truth, not custom," and will weigh our actions not in the false balance of the world, but in the true scales of the sanctuary. Thus he extirpated

the most inveterate abuses,[a] and established with so great fervour the pure maxims of the gospel, as to revive in many the primitive spirit of Christianity. To extend and perpetuate the advantages of religion, which by his zeal he had procured, he filled this country with seminaries, churches, and many hospitals; but would never suffer his own name to be recorded in any of his munificent charities or foundations. When he was at Lima, he every day visited several hospitals, comforted and exhorted the sick, and administered the sacraments. When a pestilence, though that calamity is seldom known in Peru, raged in some parts of his diocess, Turibius distributed his own necessaries in relieving the afflicted: he preached penance, because sins are the cause of chastise-

[a] The Indians were infamous for their debaucheries, and became so fond of the Spanish wines, after having once tasted them, that to purchase a small quantity they would give all their gold, and were never sober as long as they had wine to drink. But their crimes, which justly provoked the anger of heaven, could not justify the cruelty of their European enemies, in whom avarice seemed to have extinguished the sentiments both of humanity and religion. The missionary priests endeavoured in vain to put a stop to the outrages of their countrymen; and the Dominicans carried repeated complaints against them to the kings of Spain. At their remonstrances, Ferdinand, king of Castile, declared the Indians free, and forbade the Spaniards to employ them in carrying burdens, or to use a stick or whip in chastising them. The emperor Charles V. was prevailed upon to send into America, severe orders and regulations in their favour; but to very little effect. The officers, who assumed the haughty titles of conquerors of Mexico and Peru, would not be controlled. Bartholemew de las-Casas, a Dominican, and bishop of Chiapa, in New Spain, made four fruitless voyages into Castile to plead the cause of the poor Indians; he obtained ample rescripts from the king, and was constituted by him protector-general of the Indians in America. But these expedients proved too weak against men that were armed. He therefore resigned his bishopric into the hands of the pope, in 1551, and returned into the convent of his order at Valladolid; where he wrote his books, On the destruction of the Indians by the Spaniards: and On the tyranny of the Spaniards in the Indies, both dedicated to king Philip II. The archbishop of Seville, and the universities of Salamanca and Alcala forbade the impression of the answers which some wrote to defend the Spanish governors, on principles repugnant to the law of nature and of nations. These books of las-Casas, being translated into French, were scattered among the people in the Low-Countries, who had taken up arms against the Spaniards, and animated them exceedingly in their revolt. But the crimes of some ought not to be imputed to a nation: and the same country which gave birth to some monsters was most fruitful in saints, and produced the most zealous apostles and defenders of the Indians. The great principle which las-Casas defended in the emperor's council, and in his writings, was, that the conquered Indians could not, without injustice, be made slaves to the Spaniards, which the king's council and the divines agreed to with regard to those who had not been taken armed in just wars. See the history of the isle of Saint Domingo, by F. Charlevoix.

ments, and infinitely the worst of evils. He walked in the processions, bathed in tears, with his eyes always fixed on a crucifix, and offering himself to God for his flock; fasted, watched, and prayed for them, without intermission, till God was pleased to remove his scourge.

Nothing gave the saint so much pleasure as the greatest labours and dangers, to procure the least spiritual advantage to one soul. Burning with the most vehement desire of laying down his life for his flock, and of suffering all things for him who died for us, he feared no dangers. When he heard that poor Indians wandered in the mountains and deserts, he sought them out; and to comfort, instruct, or gain one of them, he often suffered incredible fatigues and dangers in the wildernesses, and boldly travelled through the haunts of lions and tigers. He spent seven years in performing his first visitation: his second employed him four years, but the third was shorter. He converted innumerable infidels, and left every where monuments of his charity. In travelling, he either prayed or discoursed on heavenly things. On his arrival at a place, it was his custom to repair first to the church to pray before the altar. To catechise the poor, he would sometimes stay two or three days in places where he had neither bed nor any kind of food. He visited every part of his vast diocess: and when others suggested to him the dangers that threatened him from rocks, precipices, marshes, rivers, robbers, and savages, his answer was that Christ came from heaven to save man, we ought not therefore to fear dangers for the sake of immortal glory. He preached and catechised without intermission, having for this purpose learned, in his old age, all the various languages of the barbarous nations of that country. Even on his journies he said mass every day with wonderful fervour and devotion. He always made a long meditation before and after it, and usually went to confession every morning; though they who best knew his interior, testified, that they were persuaded he had never in his whole life forfeited his baptismal innocence by any mortal sin. He seemed to have God and the divine honour alone before his eyes in all his words and actions, so as to give little or no attention to any thing else; by which means his prayer was perpetual. He retired in private to that

exercise often in the day, and for a long time together. In it his countenance seemed often to shine with a divine light. The care with which he studied to disguise and conceal his great mortifications and works of piety, was the proof of his sincere humility. His munificence in relieving the poor of every class, especially those who were too bashful to make their necessities publicly known, always exhausted his revenues. The decrees of his provincial councils are monuments of his zeal, piety, learning, and discretion: they have been ever since esteemed, not only in the new world, but also in Europe, and at Rome itself, as oracles. The flourishing state of the church of Peru, the great numbers of saints and eminent pastors with which it abounded, and the establishment of innumerable seminaries of piety and learning, and hospitals for the poor, were the fruit of his zeal. If he did not originally plant the faith, he was at least the great propagator of it, and the chief instrument of God in removing scandals and advancing true piety in that vast country, which till then had been a land of abominations; whilst Francis of Toledo, the great viceroy, first settled the civil government in peace and tranquillity by salutary laws, which have procured him the title of the Legislator of Peru. St. Turibius, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, in 1606, during the visitation of his diocess, fell sick at Santa, a town one hundred and ten leagues distant from Lima. He foretold his death, and ordered him to be rewarded who should bring him the first account from his physician, that his recovery was despaired of. The ardour of his faith, his hope, his love of his Creator and Redeemer, his resignation and perfect sacrifice of himself, gathered strength in the fervent exercises and aspirations which he repeated almost without ceasing in his illness. By his last will he ordered what he had about him to be distributed among his servants, and whatever else he otherwise possessed to be given to the poor. He would be carried to the church, there to receive the holy Viaticum: but received extreme-unction in his sick bed. He often repeated those words of St. Paul: *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* And in his last moments he ordered to be sung, by his bed-side, those of the Psalmist: *I rejoiced in the things that were said to me: we shall*

go into the house of the Lord. He died on the twenty-third of March, repeating those other words of the same prophet: *Into thy hands I commend my spirit.* His body being translated the year after to Lima, was found incorrupt, the joints flexible, and the skin soft. His historian, and the acts of the canonization, mention many sick restored to their health, and a girl raised to life by him whilst he was living: also many miracles wrought through his intercession after his death. He was beatified by Innocent XI. in 1679,[1] and solemnly canonized by pope Benedict XIII. in 1726. On the miracles wrought by his intercession, see Benedict XIV.[2] and especially the acts of his canonization.

A pastor of souls must be careful to animate all his exterior actions and labours in the service of his neighbour, with the interior spirit of compunction, humility, zeal, charity, and tender devotion. Without this he loses the fruit of all the pains he takes, and by them will often deserve only chastisements in the world to come; so much will his intention and the affections of his heart be infected with self-love, and depraved by various imperfections, and secret sinister desires even in the most holy functions. Therefore, a fervent noviciate, employed in the exercises of an interior life, ought to be a part of the preparation for this state; and in the discharge of his duties, a person ought always to unite contemplation with action, and reserve to himself sufficient time for conversing with God and his own soul, and taking a frequent review of his own interior. From his labours he must return frequently to prayer, and constantly nourish in his soul a spirit of fervent devotion, which will thus accompany all his exterior actions, and keep his thoughts and affections always united to God. Those who are not faithful in thus maintaining and improving in themselves an interior spirit of piety, and in watching with fear and compunction over the motions of their own hearts, will generally advance very little the kingdom of Christ in the souls of others, and are in great danger of losing their own.

(1) Bened. XIV. De Beatif & Canoniz. l. 1. Append. p. 496.—(2) De Servor. Dei Canoniz. Romæ, 1738. fol. t. 4. Tr. de Miraculis, c. 16. p. 196.

This is what St. Bernard feared in his disciple pope Eugenius III. whom he conjured with tears never to give himself up entirely to the care of others, so as not to live also for himself; so to communicate the spirit of piety to others, as not to suffer it to be drained in his own heart; to be a basin to hold it, not a pipe for it to run through.[a] This lesson is applicable, with due proportion, to other states, especially that of teaching the sciences, in which the exercises of an interior life are so much the more necessary, as the employment is more distracting, more tumultuous, and more exposed to the waves of vanity, jealousy, and other secret petty passions.

SS. VICTORIAN, PROCONSUL OF CARTHAGE, AND OTHERS, MARTYRS UNDER THE VANDALS.

Huneric, the Arian king of the Vandals in Africa, succeeded his father Genseric in 477. He behaved himself at first with moderation towards the Catholics, so that they began to hold their assemblies in those places where they had been prohibited by Genseric: but in 480, he began a grievous persecution of the clergy and holy virgins, which, in 484, became general, and occasioned vast numbers of the Catholics being put to death. Victorian, a citizen of Adrumetum, one of the principal lords of the kingdom, had been made by him governor of Carthage with the Roman title of proconsul. He was the wealthiest subject the king had, who placed great confidence in him, and he had ever behaved with an inviolable fidelity. The king, after he had published his cruel edicts, sent a message to the proconsul in the most obliging terms, promising, if he would conform to his religion, and execute his orders, to heap on him the greatest wealth and the highest honours which it was in the power of a prince to bestow. The proconsul, who amidst the glittering pomp of the world perfectly understood its emptiness, made on the spot this generous answer: "Tell the king that I trust in Christ. If his "majesty pleases, he may condemn me to the flames, or to "wild beasts, or to any torments: but I shall never consent

[a] Tuus esto ubique: concha esto, non canalis. S. Bern. l. de consid.

" to renounce the catholic church in which I have been bap-
" tized. Even if there were no other life after this, I would
" never be ungrateful and perfidious to God, who hath
" granted me the happiness of knowing him, and who hath
" bestowed on me his most precious graces." The tyrant became furious at this answer: nor can the tortures be imagined which he caused the saint to endure. Victorian suffered them with joy, and amidst them finished his glorious martyrdom. The Roman Martyrology joins with him on this day four others who were crowned in the same persecution. Two brothers of the city of Aquæ-regiæ, in the province of Byzacena, were apprehended for the faith, and conducted to Tabaia in the same province. They had promised each other, if possible, to die together; and they begged it of God, as a favour, that they might both suffer the same torments. The persecutors hung them in the air with great weights at their feet. One of them, under the excess of pain, begged to be taken down for a little ease. His brother, fearing this desire of ease might by degrees move him to deny his faith, cried out from the rack on which he was hanging: " God forbid, dear brother,
" that you should ask such a thing. Is this what we promised
" to Jesus Christ? Should not I accuse you at his terrible
" tribunal? Have you forgotten what we have sworn upon
" his body and blood, to suffer death together for his holy
" name." By these words the other was so wonderfully encouraged that he cried out: " No, no; I ask not to be
" released: on the contrary, add new weights, if you please,
" increase my tortures, exert all your cruelties till they are
" exhausted upon me." They were then burnt with red-hot plates of iron, and tormented so long, and by so many new engines of torture, that the executioners at last left them, saying:
" Every body follows their example, no one now embraces
" our religion." This they said, chiefly, because, notwithstanding they had been so long and so grievously tormented, there were no scars or bruises to be seen upon them. Two merchants of Carthage, who both bore the name of Frumentius, suffered martyrdom about the same time, and are joined with St. Victorian in the martyrologies. Among many glorious confessors at that time, one Liberatus, an eminent physician,

was sent into banishment with his wife. He only grieved to see his infant children torn from him. His wife checked his tears by these generous words: "Think no more of them, "Jesus Christ himself will have care of them, and protect "their souls." Whilst in prison, she was told by the heretics that her husband had conformed: accordingly, when she met him at the bar before the judge, she upbraided him in open court for having basely abandoned God: but discovered by his answer that a cheat had been put upon her to deceive her into her ruin. Twelve young children, when dragged away by the persecutors, held their companions by the knees till they were torn away by violence. They were most cruelly beaten and scourged every day for a long time; yet by God's grace every one of them persevered to the end of the persecution firm in the faith. See St. Victor, de Persec. Vandal. l. 5. n. 4.

ST. EDELWALD, PRIEST, C.[a]

He was, for his eminent sanctity, honoured with the priesthood whilst he lived in the monastery of Rippon. Afterward he led an eremitical life in the isle of Farne, where he died in 699, about eleven years after St. Cuthbert. His body was translated to Lindisfarne, afterward to Durham. See Bede in vita S. Cuthberti, n. 68.

[a] Edelwald, or Ethelwald, signifies *noble, potent.*

MARCH XXIV.

ST. IRENÆUS, BISHOP OF SIRMIUM, M.

From the original authentic acts of his trial in Henschenius, Ruinart, p. 403. Tillemont, t. 4. p. 248. Ceillier, t. 3. p. 497.

A. D. 304.

St. Irenæus, bishop of Sirmium, capital of part of Pannonia, (now Sirmisch, a village in Hungary, twenty-two leagues from Buda to the south) in the persecution of Dioclesian was apprehended and conducted before Probus, the governor of Pannonia, who said to him: "The divine laws oblige all "men to sacrifice to the gods." Irenæus answered: "Into "hell fire shall he be thrown, whoever shall sacrifice to the "gods." Probus. "The edicts of the most clement emperors ordain that all sacrifice to the gods, or suffer according "to law." Irenæus. "But the law of my God commands "me rather to suffer all torments than to sacrifice to the "gods." Probus. "Either sacrifice, or I will put you to the "torture." Irenæus. "You cannot do me a greater pleasure; for by that means you will make me partake of the "sufferings of my Saviour." The proconsul commanded him to be put on the rack; and whilst he was tortured, he said to him: "What do you say now, Irenæus? Will you sacrifice?" Irenæus. "I sacrifice to my God by confessing his "holy name, and so have I always sacrificed to him." All Irenæus's family was in the utmost concern for him. His mother, his wife, and his children surrounded him. His children embraced his feet, crying out: "Father, dear father, "have pity on yourself and on us." His wife, dissolved in tears, cast herself about his neck, and, tenderly embracing him, conjured him to preserve himself for her, and his innocent children, the pledges of their mutual love. His

mother, with a voice broken with sobs, sent forth lamentable cries and sighs, which were accompanied with those of their servants, neighbours, and friends; so that all round the rack on which the martyr was hanging, nothing was heard but sobs, groans, and lamentations. Irenæus resisted all these violent assaults, opposing those words of our Lord: *If any one renounce me before men, I will renounce him before my Father who is in heaven.* He made no answer to their pressing solicitations, but raised his soul above all considerations of flesh and blood to him who was looking down on his conflict from above, waiting to crown his victory with immortal glory; and who seemed to cry out to him from his lofty throne in heaven: "Come, make haste to enjoy me." The governor said to him: "Will you be insensible to such marks of tender-"ness and affection? can you see so many tears shed for you "without being moved? It is not beneath a great courage to "be touched with compassion. Sacrifice, and do not destroy "yourself in the flower of your age." Irenæus said: "It is "that I may not destroy myself that I refuse to sacrifice." The governor sent him to prison, where he remained a long time, suffering divers torments. At the second time of examination, the governor, after having pressed him to sacrifice, asked him if he had a wife, parents, or children alive. The saint answered all these questions in the negative. "Who then were those "that wept for you at your first examination?" Irenæus made answer: "Our Lord Jesus Christ hath said: *He that* "*loveth father or mother, wife or children, brothers or relations,* "*more than me, is not worthy of me.* So when I lift up my "eyes to contemplate that God whom I adore, and the joys "he hath promised to those who faithfully serve him, I for-"get that I am a father, a husband, a son, a master, a friend." Probus said: "But you do not therefore cease to be so. Sa-"crifice at least for their sakes." Irenæus replied; "My "children will not lose much by my death; for I leave them "for father that same God whom they adore with me; so let "nothing hinder you from executing the orders of your em-"peror upon me." Probus. "Throw not yourself away. "I cannot avoid condemning you." Irenæus. "You cannot "do me a greater favour, or give me a more agreeable plea-

"sure." Then Probus passed sentence after this manner: "I order that Irenæus, for disobeying the emperor's commands, be cast into the river."[a] Irenæus replied: "After "so many threats, I expected something extraordinary, and "you content yourself with drowning me. How comes this? "You do me an injury; for you deprive me of the means of "shewing the world how much Christians, who have a lively "faith, despise death, though attended with the most cruel "torments." Probus, enraged at this, added to the sentence that he should be first beheaded. Irenæus returned thanks to God as for a second victory. When arrived on the bridge of Diana, from which he was to be thrown, stripping off his clothes, and lifting up his hands to heaven, he prayed thus: "Lord Jesus Christ, who condescendest to suffer for the sal- "vation of the world, command the heavens to open, that "the angels may receive the soul of thy servant Irenæus, who "suffers for thy name, and for thy people of the catholic "church of Sirmium." Then his head being struck off, he was thrown into the river on the twenty-fifth of March, on which day his name occurs in the Roman Martyrology. He suffered in the year 304. He was married before he was ordained bishop; but lived continent from that time, as the laws of the church required.

The martyrs most perfectly accomplished the precept of renouncing all things for Christ; but all who desire truly to become his disciples, are bound to do it in spirit. Many aspire to perfection by austere practices of exterior mortification and long exercises of devotion; yet make little progress, and, after many years, remain always subject to many imperfections and errors in a spiritual life. The reason is, because they neglected to lay the foundation by renouncing themselves. This requires constant watchfulness, courageous self-denial, a perfect spirit of humility, meekness, and obedience, and sincere compunction, in which a soul examines and detects her vices, bewails her past sins and those of the whole world, sighs at

[a] Meaning the Boswethe, which runs through Sirmisch, and falls into the sea five leagues lower.

the consideration of its vanity and slavery, and of her distance from heaven, labours daily to cleanse her mind from all idle thoughts, and her heart from all sin, all irregular attachments, and superfluous desires, flies the vain joys of the world, and often entertains herself on the bloody passion of Christ. If the affections are thus purified, and this cleanness of heart daily more and more cultivated, the rest costs very little, and the soul makes quick progress in the paths of holy love, by the assiduous exercises of contemplation and prayer, a constant fidelity in all her actions, and the most fervent and pure attention to the divine will and presence. Voluntary imperfections and failings, especially if habitual, both blind and defile the soul, disquiet her, extremely weaken her, and damp the fervour of her good desires and resolutions. They must therefore be retrenched with the utmost resolution and vigilance, especially those which arise from any secret vanity, sensuality, or want of the most perfect sincerity, candour, and simplicity. An habitual attachment to any failing, how trifling soever it may appear, how subtle and secret soever it may be, and under whatever pretences it may be disguised, exceedingly obstructs the operations of the Holy Ghost, and the effusion of divine grace in a soul.

ST. SIMON AN INFANT, MARTYR AT TRENT.

In the year 1472, when the Jews of Trent (famous for the last general council held there) met in their synagogue on Tuesday in Holy Week, to deliberate on the preparations for the approaching festival of the Passover, which fell that year on the Thursday following, they came to a resolution of sacrificing to their inveterate hatred of the christian name, some christian infant on the Friday following, or Good-Friday. A Jewish physician undertook to procure such an infant for the horrid purpose. And while the Christians were at the office of Tenebræ on Wednesday evening, he found a child called Simon, about two years old, whom by caresses and by shewing him a piece of money, he decoyed from the door of a house, the master and mistress whereof were gone to church, and carried him off. On Thursday evening the

principal Jews shut themselves up in a chamber adjoining to their synagogue, and at midnight began their cruel butchery of this innocent victim. Having stopped his mouth with an apron to prevent his crying out, they made several incisions in his body, gathering his blood in a basin. Some, all this while, held his arms stretched out in the form of a cross: others held his legs. The child being half dead, they raised him on his feet, and while two of them held him by the arms, the rest pierced his body on all sides with their awls and bodkins. When they saw the child had expired, they sung round it: "In the same manner did we treat Jesus the God of the "Christians: thus may our enemies be confounded for ever." The magistrates and parents making strict search after the lost child, the Jews hid it first in a barn of hay, then in a cellar, and at last threw it into the river. But God confounded all their endeavours to prevent the discovery of the fact, which being fully proved upon them, with its several circumstances, they were put to death; the principal actors in the tragedy being broke upon the wheel and burnt. The synagogue was destroyed, and a chapel was erected on the spot where the child was martyred. God honoured this innocent victim with many miracles. The relicks lie in a stately tomb in St. Peter's church at Trent: and his name occurs in the Roman Martyrology. See the authentic account of Tiberinus, the physician, who inspected the child's body; and the juridical acts in Surius and the Bollandists, with Henschenius's notes on this day; also Martenne, Ampl. Collectio Vet. t. 2. p. 1516. and Bened. XIV. de Canoniz. l. 1. c. 14. p. 105.

ST. WILLIAM OF NORWICH, M.

This martyr was another victim of the implacable rage of the Jews against our holy religion. He suffered in the twelfth year of his age. Having been not long bound an apprentice to a tanner in Norwich, a little before Easter, in 1137, the Jews of that city having enticed him into their houses, seized and gagged him: then they bound, mocked and crucified him, in derision of Christ: they also pierced his left side. On Easter-day they put the body into a sack,

and carried it into Thorp-wood, now a heath, near the gates of the city, there to bury it; but being discovered, left it hanging on a tree. The body was honoured with miracles, and, in 1144, removed into the church-yard of the cathedral of the Holy Trinity, by the monks of that abbey; and in 1150, into the choir. On the place in Thorp-wood, where the body of the martyred child was found, a chapel was built, called St. William in the wood. Mr. Weever writes that, "the "Jews in the principal cities of the kingdom, did use some-"times to steal away, circumcise, crown with thorns, whip, "torture, and crucify some neighbour's male-child, in mock-"ery and scorn of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." St. Richard of Pontoise, in France, was martyred by them in that manner. As also St. Hugh, (according to Matthew Paris and John Capgrave) a child crucified at Lincoln, in 1255. Nevertheless it is a notorious slander of some authors, who, from these singular and extraordinary instances, infer this to have been at any time the custom or maxim of that people. The English calendars commemorated St. William on the twenty-fourth of March. See the history of his martyrdom and miracles by Thomas of Monmouth, a cotemporary monk; also the Saxon Chronicle of the same age, and Bloomfield's History of Norfolk.[a]

[a] Pope Benedict XIV. l. 1. de Canon. c. 14. p. 103. shews that children who die after baptism before the use of reason, though saints, ought not to be canonized, because they never practised any heroic degree of virtue; and because this was never authorized by tradition in the church. Martyrs only, or infants, whether baptized or no, which were slain out of hatred to the name of Christ, are to be accepted, as is clear from the example of the Holy Innocents, who are styled martyrs by St. Irenæus, Origen, and other fathers, and the most ancient missals and homilies of fathers on their festival, prove them to have been honoured as such from the primitive ages. Hence infants murdered by Jews, out of hatred to Christ, have been ranked among the martyrs; as St. Simon of Trent, by the authority of the bishop of that city, afterward confirmed by the decrees of the popes Sixtus V. and Gregory XIII. also St. William of Norwich in England, (though this child having attained to the use of reason, is rather to be called an adult martyr.) And St. Richard of Pontoise, also about twelve years old, murdered in 1182, by certain Jews in the reign of Philip Augustus, who for this and other crimes banished the Jews out of France, in April, that same year. The body of St. Richard was translated to Paris, and enshrined in the parish church of the Holy Innocents, where his feast is kept on the thirtieth of March, but at Pontoise on the twenty-fifth. The celebrated F. Gaguin has wrote the history of his martyrdom, with an account of several miracles wrought at his shrine. His head is still shewn in that church; the rest of his relicks are said to have been carried off by the English, when they were masters of Paris.

MARCH XXV.

THE ANNUNCIATION
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

This great festival takes its name from the happy tidings brought by the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary, concerning the Incarnation of the Son of God. It commemorates the most important embassy that was ever known: an embassy sent by the King of kings, performed by one of the chief princes of his heavenly court; directed, not to the kings or emperors of the earth, but to a poor, unknown, retired virgin, who being endowed with the most angelic purity of soul and body, being withal perfectly humble and devoted to God, was greater in his eyes than all the sceptres in the world could make an universal monarch. Indeed, God, by the choice which he is pleased to make of a poor virgin, for the accomplishment of the greatest of all mysteries and graces, clearly demonstrates that earthly diadems, dignities, and treasures, are of no consideration with him; and that perfect humility and sanctity alone constitute true greatness. God, who is Almighty, can do all things by himself, without making use of the concurrence of creatures. Nevertheless he vouchsafes, in his exterior works, most frequently to use their co-operation. If he reveals his will and speaks to men, it is by the intervention of his prophets, and these he often enlightens by the ministry of angels. Many of the ancient patriarchs were honoured by him with the most sublime commissions. By Moses he delivered his people from the Egyptian slavery, by him he gave them his law, and he appointed him mediator in his alliance with them. When the Son of God became man, he could have taken upon him our nature without the co-operation of any creature; but was

pleased to be born of a woman. In the choice of her whom he raised to this most sublime of all dignities to which any pure creature could be exalted, he pitched upon her who, by the riches of his grace and virtues, was of all others the most holy and the most perfect. The design of this embassy of the archangel is as extraordinary as the persons concerned in it. It is to give a Saviour to the world, a victim of propitiation to the sinner, a model to the just, a son to this Virgin, remaining still a virgin, and a new nature to the Son of God, the nature of man, capable of suffering pain and anguish in order to the satisfaction of God's justice for our transgressions. And the Son of God being to take an human body formed of her substance, the Holy Ghost, who by a power all divine was to her in place of a spouse, was not content to render her body capable of giving life to a Man-God, but likewise enriched her soul with a fulness of grace, that there might be a sort of proportion between the cause and the effect, and she the better qualified to co-operate towards this mystery of sanctity.

The angel begins his address to her with *Hail! full of grace.*[1] This is not the first time that angels appeared to women. But we find not that they were ever treated with that respect which the angel Gabriel shews to Mary. Sarah and Agar were visited by these celestial spirits, but not with an honour like that wherewith the angel on this occasion addresses the Blessed Virgin, saying: *Hail! full of grace.* He considers her as the greatest object among creatures of God's favour, affection, and complacency. He admires in her those wonderful effects of the divine liberality, those magnificent gifts and graces, those exalted virtues, which have placed the very foundation of her spiritual edifice on the holy mountains,[2] in a degree of perfection surpassing that of all pure creatures. He admires that perfect gratitude with which she always received God's grace, and her perfect fidelity in corresponding with it, and advancing in sanctity, by the help thereof, with a solicitude answerable to her love and gratitude, for the preservation and increase of so inestimable a treasure. *Full of grace.* The first encomium which St. John

[1] Luke i. 28.—[2] Ps. 86.

gives us of the glory of the *Word made flesh* is, that he was *full of grace and truth.*[3] God forbid that we should say that Mary was full of grace in the same manner as her Son. For he is the very source and origin of it, *from whose fulness all* the saints, Mary not excepted, *have received*[4] whatever degree they possess of grace and sanctity. St. Luke assures us also, that St. Stephen was full of grace and the Holy Ghost,[5] but it was a fulness in regard to a less capacity, and in relation to a lower function. Moreover to St. Stephen and other saints, who have received large portions of heavenly grace, we may say in those other words of the angel: *You have found favour with God;* but those favours, though very great in themselves, were not to be compared with that which from all eternity was reserved for Mary. God made the saints the object of his gratuitous election, and he qualified them with his graces to be the messengers of his Son, the preachers and witnesses of his gospel; but Mary was his choice, and was furnished with his graces to bear the most illustrious, the most exalted title of honour that heaven could bestow on a pure creature, to conceive of her proper substance the divine Word made man. If then the grace of God so raises a person in worth and merit, that there is not any prince on earth who deserves to be compared with a soul that is dignified with the lowest degree of sanctifying grace; what shall we say or think of Mary, in whom the fulness of grace was only a preparation to her maternity? What shall we think of ourselves (but in an opposite light) who wilfully expose this greatest of all treasures on so many occasions to be lost, whereas we ought wilfully to forego and renounce all the advantages and pleasures of this world, rather than hazard the loss of the least degree of it, and be most fervent in our supplications to God for the gaining, preserving, and increasing so great a treasure: forasmuch as it is a pledge of God's love, a participation of his spirit, and a title to the possession of his heavenly kingdom.

But who can be surprised at those inestimable treasures which God on this occasion, with so liberal a hand, bestows

[3] John i. 14.—[4] Ibid. 16.—[5] Acts iv. 8.

on Mary, if he considers the purport of the following words of the angel to her: *The Lord is with thee.* He is with her in a manner more intimate, more perfect, and more divine, than he ever was or will be with any other creature. He is with her, not only by his essence, by his presence, by his power; for he is thus with all his creatures: He is with her, not only by his *actual* grace touching her heart and enlightening her understanding; he is thus many times with the sinner: He is with her, not only with his sanctifying grace, making her agreeable in his sight, and placing her in the number of his children; he is present in this manner with all the just: He is with her, not only by a special protection guiding her in his ways, and leading her securely to the term of salvation; this he does for the elect: but he is also with her by a substantial and corporeal presence, residing personally and really in her. In her, and of her substance, is this day formed his adorable body; in her he reposes for nine months, with his whole divinity and humanity. It is in this ineffable manner that he is with Mary, and with none but Mary. O glorious Virgin, thrice happy Mother, from this source and ocean of all grace what heavenly blessings in so long a space of time must have flowed upon you! and what honours must be due to one so nearly allied to our great Creator! What intercession so prevalent as that of the *Mother of divine grace!*

The angel concludes his address with these words: *Blessed art thou among women.*[6] *Blessed,* as being chosen preferably to all of her sex, to be the glorious instrument, in the hand of God, for removing the maledictions laid on mankind in punishment of their sins, and in communicating to them the source of all good. And on this account it was, that *all* succeeding *generations,* as she foretold of herself, *should call her Blessed;*[7] regarding her as the centre in which all the blessings of the Old and New Testament are drawn together.

Though we are obliged to consider the eminent quality of Mother of God, as the source of all other graces bestowed on the Blessed Virgin, it must yet be owned it is not the

[6] Luke i. 28.—[8] Ibid. 48.

greatest, and that she was happier in loving Jesus Christ, than in having conceived him and brought him forth. She is *blessed among women*, and above the rest of creatures, not precisely on account of her maternity, but because she received a fulness of grace proportioned to the dignity to which she was chosen. So that, according to the remark of the holy fathers, she was happier for her sanctity, than for her dignity: for her virtues, than for her privileges. Among her virtues, that of purity seems particularly deserving of notice on this solemnity, as the epistle for this festival records that memorable prophecy of Isaias, *That a virgin should conceive and bring forth a son*;[3] the most remarkable of all the signs God had promised the world for making known the accomplishment of the mystery of man's redemption. And indeed right reason seemed to require that she, who was to be the mother of God, should be of an integrity above reproach, and incapable of yielding to any solicitation: it was highly fit her virginity should be perfectly pure, and removed as far as possible from the least suspicion of blemish. For this reason, the moment God had chosen her to be his mother, he exacted from her the most authentic proofs of an inviolable attachment to purity. Thus, it is not in a crowd, or in idle conversation, but in a retreat, that the angel finds her. It is not from the distraction or diversions and entertainments that he calls her aside to deliver his message: no; she is alone in her house with the door shut; and, as St. Ambrose says, "he must be an angel that gets entrance there."[a] Hence, according to the same holy father, it was not the angel's appearance that gave her trouble, for he will not have it to be doubted but heavenly visions and a commerce with the blessed spirits had been familiar to her. But what alarmed her, he says, was the angel's appearing in human form, in the shape of a young man. What might add to her fright on the occasion was his addressing her in the strain of praise, which kind of words flattery often puts in the mouths of ill-designing men. And how few, alas! are able to with-

[3] Isai. vii. 14.

[a] O hospitium solis angelis pervium! S. Amb. in Luc.

stand such dangers? But Mary, guarded by her modesty, is in confusion at expressions of this sort, and dreads the least appearance of deluding flattery. Such high commendations make her cautious how she answers, till in silence she has more fully considered of the matter: *She revolved in her mind,* says St. Luke, *what manner of salutation this should be.*[9] Ah! what numbers of innocent souls have been corrupted for want of using the like precautions? Mary is retired, but how seldom now-a-days are young virgins content to stay at home! Mary is silent when commended, and answered not a word till she had well considered what she ought to say: but now it is to be feared that young women never think so little as when they are entertained with flattery. Every soothing word is but too apt to slide from the ear to the heart; and who can tell what multitudes, by their unwary methods, suffer shipwreck of their modesty, and then of their purity. For how can this be long-lived after having lost all its guardians. No, it cannot be. Unless a virgin be assiduous in prayer and spiritual reading, modest in her dress, prudent and wary in her choice of company, and extremely careful in the government of her eyes and tongue when she happens to be in conversation with the other sex, there is but too much reason to apprehend that either her heart is already betrayed, or in danger of being vanquished by the next assault of her spiritual enemy. A dread of, and a speedy flight from all dangerous occasions is the only security of virtue and innocence. Presumption wants no other tempter. Even Mary, though confirmed in grace, was only secure by this fear and distrust in herself.

A second cause why Mary was disturbed at the words of the angel was, because they contained her praises. Humble souls always tremble and sink with confusion in their own minds when they hear themselves commended; because they are deeply penetrated with a sense of their own weakness and insufficiency, and they consider contempt as their due. They know that the glory of all gifts belongs solely to God, and they justly fear lest the poison of praise should

[9] Luke i. 29.

insinuate itself into their minds; being sensible how infinitely dangerous honours and flattery are to humility. Are these our sentiments? Do we never speak of ourselves to our own advantage? Do we never artfully praise ourselves, or willingly lend an ear to what flatterers say to applaud us? Are we troubled when we hear ourselves praised? What gives trouble but to too many is, that men give them not what they take to be their right; and that their praises equal not the notion they have framed of their merits. The high eulogiums bestowed on Mary by the angel she answers no otherwise than by a profound silence, by a saintly trouble of mind, which, with a modest blush, appears in her countenance. The angel, to calm her disquiets, says to her: *Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favour before God.* He then informs her, that she is to conceive and bring forth a son whose name shall be Jesus, who shall be great, and the son of the Most High, and possessed of the throne of David, her illustrious ancestor. Mary, who, according to St. Austin,[b] had consecrated her virginity to God by vow, is not at all weakened by the prospect of such a dignity, in her resolution of living a virgin: but, on the contrary, out of a just concern to know how she may comply with the will of God without prejudice to her vow, neither moved by curiosity, nor doubting of the miracle or its possibility, she inquires: *How shall this be?* Nor does she give her consent till the heavenly messenger acquaints her that it is to be a work of the Holy Ghost, who in making her fruitful will not entrench in the least upon her virginal purity, but cause her to be a mother, still remaining, as she desires, a pure virgin.

Moreover, had not Mary been deep rooted in humility, what impression must not these great promises have made in her heart, at a time especially when the first transports are so apt to overflow the soul on the sudden news of an unexpected glory. The world knows, from too frequent experience, how strongly the promise and expectation of new dignities raise the spirits, and alter the words, the looks, and the

[b] Quod profecto non diceret nisi se virginem ante vovisset. L. de Virg. c. 4. t. 6. p. 343.

whole carriage of proud men. But Mary is still the same, or rather much more lowly and meek in spirit upon the accession of this unparalleled dignity. She sees no cause to pride herself in her virtues, graces, and privileges, knowing that the glory of all these are due only to the divine author and bestower of them. In submission therefore to God's will, without any farther enquiries, she expresses her assent in these humble but powerful words: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.* What faith and confidence does her answer express! What profound humility and perfect obedience! She was saluted Mother of God, yet uses no word of dignity, but styles herself nothing more than his handmaid, to be commanded and employed by him as he shall think fittest. The world, as heaven had decreed, was not to have a Saviour till she had given her consent to the angel's proposal; she gives it, and behold the power and efficacy of her submissive Fiat! That moment, the mystery of love and mercy promised to mankind four thousand years before, foretold by so many prophets, desired by so many saints, is wrought on earth: That moment, the Word of God is for ever united to humanity; the soul of Jesus Christ, produced from nothing, begins to enjoy God, and to know all things past, present, and to come: That moment, God begins to have an adorer, who is infinite, and the world a mediator who is omnipotent; and, to the working of this great mystery, Mary alone is chosen to co-operate by her free assent. The prophets represent the earth as moved out of its place, and the mountains as melting away before the very countenance of God looking down upon the world. Now that he descends in person, who would not expect that the whole heavens should be moved? But another kind of appearance best suited his coming on this occasion, which was with the view of curing our pride by his wonderful humiliations, and thereby repair the injury the Godhead had suffered from our unjust usurpation; and not to shew forth his grandeur, and display his all-glorious majesty. How far are the ways of God above those of men! how greatly does divine wisdom differ from human folly! how does every circumstance in this mystery confound the pride, the pomp, and the

vain titles of worldly grandeur, and recommend to us the love of silence and sincere humility! Shall the disciples of Christ have other sentiments?

But what tongue can express the inward feelings and affections which then filled the glowing heart of the most pure Mother of God? What light shone in her understanding to penetrate the mysteries and the excess of the unfathomed goodness of God? what ardours of holy love inflamed her will? what Jubilee filled her soul? Let men redeemed exult and praise, returning to God their best homages of adoration, thanksgiving, and love. It is for this duty that the church has appointed this present festival, which we ought chiefly to consecrate to the contemplation of this adorable mystery with hymns of love, praise, and thanksgiving. It was the hope and comfort of all the ancient saints, and the great object of all their earnest prayers, tears, and sighs. The prophets had a view to it in all their predictions, this being the principal point in all the wonderful revelations of God made to his church since the fall of Adam in Paradise, whom he immediately comforted with a promise and glimpse of this glorious mercy. Every ordinance in the law which he gave the Jews was typical, and had either an immediate, or at least an indirect relation to Christ, and our redemption by him. Among the numberless religious rites and sacrifices which were prescribed them, there was not one which did not in some manner represent or allude to this mystery. How high an idea ought this circumstance to give us of its incomprehensible greatness, which its nature and wonderful effects and fruits must enhance beyond the power of words! We are lost in astonishment, when we contemplate this prodigy of omnipotence, and infinite wisdom and mercy, and adore it in raptures and silence.

Gerson cries out on this mystery: "What ought every "heart to say or think? every religious, every loving and "faithful heart? It ought to rejoice exceedingly in this singu- "lar comfort, and to salute you with Gabriel: *O blessed among* "*women*. On this day is accomplished the great desire of the "holy ancient patriarchs and prophets, who often languished "to hasten it, in their sighs, prayers, and writings, crying out

"aloud to *the desire of the eternal hills.* On this day is the "Saviour of mankind, true God and man, conceived in the "womb of Mary. This day our Lady received a name more "sublime than can be understood, and the most noble of all "names possible after that of her Son, by which she is called "the Mother of God. On this day the greatest of miracles is "wrought. Hear the wonders of love and mercy on this fes-"tival: God is made man; and man, in the divine person, "God: he that is immortal is become mortal, and the Eter-"nal is born in time. A virgin is a mother, a woman the "mother of God; a creature has conceived her Creator!" St. Peter Chrysologus expresses the fruits of this mystery as follows: "One virgin so receives and contains God in the "lodging of her breast as to procure peace for the earth, "glory for heaven, salvation for the lost, life for the dead, an "alliance of those on earth with the blessed in heaven, and "the commerce of God with the flesh."[10]

From the example of the Virgin Mary in this mystery, how ardent a love ought we to conceive of purity and humility! According to St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Jerom,[11] she would rather be the spouse of God in spirit, by spotless virginity, than his mother in the flesh; and so acceptable was this her disposition to God, that she deserved immediately to hear, that she should bring forth the Son of the Most High, still remaining a most pure virgin: nor would God have otherwise raised her to this astonishing honour. The Holy Ghost is invited by purity to dwell in souls, but is chased away by the filth of the contrary vice. The dreadful havock which it now-a-days makes among christian souls, calls for torrents of tears, and is the source of the infidelity, and universal desolation which spreads on every side. Humility is the foundation of a spiritual life. By it Mary was prepared for the extraordinary graces, and all virtues with which she was enriched, and for the eminent dignity of Mother of God.

St. Austin says, that according to an ancient tradition, this mystery was completed on the twenty-fifth of March.[12] Both eastern and western churches celebrate it on this day, and have done so at least ever since the fifth century. This fes-

[10] Serm. 146.—[11] St. Greg. Nyss. Tr. de Nativ.—[12] L. 4. de Trin. c. 5.

tival is mentioned by pope Gelasius I. in 492. The council of Constantinople, in 692, orders the missa præsanctificatorum, as on Good-Friday, to be said on all days in Lent, except Saturdays, Sundays, and the feast of the Annunciation.[19] The tenth council of Toledo, in 656, calls this solemnity, The festival of the Mother of God,[c] by way of excellence. To praise the divine goodness for this incomprehensible mystery of the incarnation, Urban II. in the council of Clermont, in 1095, ordered the bell to be rung every day for the triple Angelical Salutation, called Angelus Domini, at morning, noon, and night. Which practice of devotion several popes have recommended by indulgences, as John XXII. Calixtus III. Paul III. Alexander VII. and Clement X. The late Benedict XIII. has augmented them to those who at the aforesaid hours shall devoutly recite this prayer kneeling.

ST. CAMMIN, ABBOT.

Among the most celebrated saints of Ireland, published by Usher, is placed St. Cammin, who in his youth retired from the noise of the world into the island of Inish-Kealtair, in the lake of Derg-Derch, or Dergid, in the confines of Thomond and Galway. Here several disciples resorting to him, he built a monastery, which out of veneration for his extraordinary sanctity, was long very famous among the Irish. The church of that place still retains, from him, the name of Tempul-Cammin. His happy death is placed in the Inis-Fallen annals about the year 653. See Usher's Antiqu. p. 503.

[19] See Thomasin des Fêtes, p. 229.

[c] Festum Sanctæ Virginis Genitricis dies, festivitas matris—nam quod festum est matris nisi incarnatio Verbi? Conc. Tolèt. X.

MARCH XXVI.

ST. LUDGER, BISHOP OF MUNSTER,

APOSTLE OF SAXONY.

From his life written by Altfrid, one of his successors, and another compiled by a monk of Werden, about sixty years after the death of St. Ludger, of inferior authority to the former, both extant in Mabillon, Act. Bened. t. 4. p. 289: also a third life in Surius and the Bollandists, wrote by the monks of Werden, perhaps twenty years after the latter. See Hist. Liter. Fr. t. 5. p. 660.

A. D. 809.

St. Ludger was born in Friseland, about the year 743. His father, who was a nobleman of the first rank in that country, at the child's own request, committed him very young to the care of St. Gregory, the disciple of St. Boniface, and his successor in the government of the see of Utrecht. Ludger had the happiness to have seen that holy martyr, and received from him strong impressions of virtue. Gregory educated him in his monastery, and admiring his progress in learning and piety, gave him the clerical tonsure. Ludger, desirous of farther improvement, passed over into England; and spent four years and a half under Alcuin, who was rector of a famous school at York. He was careful to employ his whole time in the exercises of piety, and the study of the holy scriptures and fathers. In 773 he returned home, and St. Gregory dying in 776, his successor, Alberic, compelled our saint to receive the holy order of priesthood, and employed him for several years in preaching the word of God in Friseland, where he converted great numbers, both among the Pagans and vicious Christians, founded several monasteries, and built many churches. This was the state of affairs, when the pagan Saxons, ravaging the country, obliged him to leave Friseland.

Whereupon he travelled to Rome to consult pope Adrian II. what course to take, and what he thought God required of him. He then retired for three years and a half to Mount Cassino, where he wore the habit of the Order, and conformed to the practice of the rule during his stay, but made no religious vows. In 787, Charlemagne overcame the Saxons and conquered Friseland, and the coast of the Germanic ocean as far as Denmark. Ludger hearing that by this revolution the mission was again opened, returned into east Friseland, where he converted the Saxons to the faith; as he also did the province of Sudergou, now called Westphalia. He founded the monastery of Werden,[a] in the county of La Mark, twenty-nine miles from Cologne. His old master Alcuin being come into France, made his merit known to the emperor Charlemagne. In 802, Hildebald, archbishop of Cologne, not regarding his strenuous resistance, ordained him bishop of Mimigardeford (or ford of the river Mimigard) a city which afterward changed this name for that of Munster, from the great monastery of regular canons which St. Ludger built there, to serve for his cathedral. He joined to his diocess five cantons of Friseland which he had converted, and also founded the monastery of Helmstad, afterward called Ludger-Clooster, or Ludger's cloister, in the dutchy of Brunswick.

He was very learned in the holy scriptures, and read daily lectures thereon to his disciples. He fasted and watched much, and always wore a hair-shirt, but secretly, so that no one knew of it till a little before his death. He eat some flesh at certain times, chiefly to conform to others, but always observing a strict temperance. When invited to any entertainment, his discourse the whole time was on religious subjects, and he withdrew immediately after. To the poor he was affable and courteous, but firm and resolute to the proud rich. He exerted an episcopal vigour against impenitent sinners, and refused all manner of presents from an incestuous lady, and at length excomunicated her. Except what was absolutely necessary for his subsistence, he employed the revenues of his own

[a] Some have, by mistake, confounded this place with Ferden, or Werden, beyond the Weser.

estate and those of his bishopric in charities. He was accused to the emperor Charlemagne, among other things, of wasting his income and neglecting the embellishment of churches within his jurisdiction. And this prince, who loved to see churches magnificent, giving ear to the information, ordered him to appear at court. The morning after his arrival, the emperor's chamberlain brought him word that his attendance was required. The saint, being then at his prayers, told the officer that he would follow him as soon as he had finished them. He was sent for three several times before he was ready, which the courtiers represented as a contempt of his majesty; and the emperor, with some emotion, asked him why he had made him wait so long, though he had sent for him so often. The bishop answered, that though he had the most profound respect for his majesty, yet God was infinitely above him; that whilst we are occupied with him, it is our duty to forget every thing else; and that in this he judged he had rather obeyed than neglected his majesty's orders, who, when he was chosen bishop, had recommended to him ever to prefer the service of God to that of men. This answer made such an impression on the emperor, in favour of the saint, that he looked upon it as a complete justification of his conduct as to every particular that had been laid to his charge: he accordingly dismissed him with honour, and disgraced his accusers. The saint took this liberty with a religious prince, that he might condemn the sloth of many who suffer distractions or earthly trifles to interrupt their commerce with God; but they who leave prayer for necessary works of charity or obedience, find God still in the exercises of those virtues. St. Ludger required so devout an attention at divine service, that being at prayers one night with his clergy, and one of them stooping down to mend the fire and hinder it from smoking, the saint after prayer severely rebuked him for it, and inflicted on him a penance for some days. St. Ludger was favoured with the gift of miracles and prophecy. He foretold the invasions of the Normans from Denmark and Norway, and what ravages they would make in the French empire, and this at a time when there was not the least apprehension of any such thing. His great zeal inclined him to go and preach the faith

to these northern nations, but the king would not allow of it. His last sickness, though violent, did not hinder him from continuing his functions to the very last day of his life, which was Passion-Sunday, on which day he preached very early in the morning, said mass towards nine, and preached again before night, foretelling withal to those that were about him, that he should die the following night; and fixing upon a place in his monastery of Werden where he chose to be interred. He died accordingly on the twenty-sixth of March, at midnight. His relicks are still kept at Werden. Joseph, an Englishman, a disciple of Alcuin, whom he attended into France, wrote, in sixteen verses, an eulogium of St. Ludger, published by Vossius[1] and Mabillon, as a specimen of good poetry for that age.

Nothing so much scandalizes the very infidels, or shews the decay of piety, and loss of all sense of religion among Christians, as their disrespectful behaviour in the house of God and at the time of prayer. An awful strict silence, the most profound exterior respect, and penetrating inward devotion of heart, must essentially accompany our homages when we present them before the throne of God, in whose presence the highest seraphims annihilate themselves. This silence we must observe not only with our tongues, but also with our bodies and all our limbs, both out of respect to the presence of God and his altar, and also not to give the least occasion of distraction to others. Prayer is an action so sublime and supernatural, that the church in her canonical hours teaches us to begin it by a fervent petition of grace to perform it well. What an insolence and mockery is it to join with this petition an open disrespect and a neglect of all necessary precautions against distractions? We ought never to appear before God, to tender him our homages or supplications, without trembling, and without being deaf to all creatures, and shutting all our senses to every object that can distract our minds from God. In the life of F. Simon Gourdan, a regular canon of St. Victor's at Paris, who died in the odour of sanctity, in the year 1729, the eighty-fifth of his age, it is related that king

(1) Voss. de histor. lat. l. 2. c. 3.

Lewis XIV. came to see him, and to recommend himself to his prayers. The servant of God made him wait till he had finished his thanksgiving after mass, which edified that great prince, who said, "he does well; for he is employed in attending on a "much greater king." Though St. Francis of Sales on the like occasions chose rather to forego or defer his own private devotions, than not to be ready immediately to wait on others, in order to give them all the spiritual advice they desired; yet at prayer at least he and all truly religious persons seemed in some degree to rival the heavenly spirits in their awe and reverence. Silence at that holy time, or place, has always been esteemed a thing so sacred, that when the temple of Solomon was building, God commanded that there should not be heard so much as the sound of a hammer, or any other instrument. Even when we come from conversing with God, we ought to appear all penetrated with the divine presence, and rather as angels than men. Sanctity, modesty, and the marks of an heavenly spirit, ought to shine in our exterior, and to inspire others by our very sight with religious awe and devotion.

ST. BRAULIO, BISHOP OF SARAGOSSA, C.

He was the great assistant of St. Isidore of Seville in settling the discipline of the church of Spain, and is one of those holy pastors to whose zeal, learning, and labours it has always professed itself much indebted. He died in 646, in the twentieth year of his episcopacy. He has left us two letters to St. Isidore, an eulogium of that saint, and a catalogue of his works: also an hymn in Iambic verse in honour of St. Emilian, and the life of that servant of God, who after living long a hermit, was called to serve a parish in the diocess of Tarragon, where a famous monastery now bears his name.

MARCH XXVII.

ST. JOHN OF EGYPT, HERMIT.

From Rufinus, in the second book of the lives of the fathers; and from Palladius in his Lausiaca: this last had often seen him. Also St. Jerom, St. Austin, Cassian, &c. See Tillemont, t. 10. p. 9. See also the Wonders of God in the wilderness, p. 160.

A. D. 394.

St. John was born about the year 305, was of a mean extraction, and brought up to the trade of a carpenter. At twenty-five years of age he forsook the world, and put himself under the guidance and direction of an ancient holy anchoret with such an extraordinary humility and simplicity as struck the venerable old man with admiration; who inured him to obedience by making him water a dry stick for a whole year as if it were a live plant, and perform several other things as seemingly ridiculous, all which he executed with the utmost fidelity. To the saint's humility and ready obedience, Cassian[1] attributes the extraordinary gifts he afterward received from God. He seems to have lived about twelve years with this old man, till his death, and about four more in different neighbouring monasteries.

Being about forty years of age, he retired alone to the top of a rock of very difficult ascent, near Lycopolis.[a] His cell he walled up, leaving only a little window through which he received all necessaries, and spoke to those who visited him what might be for their spiritual comfort and edification. During five days in the week he conversed only with God;

[1] Coll. b. 4. c. 21. p. 81.

[a] A city in the north of Thebais, in Egypt.

but on Saturdays and Sundays all but women had free access to him for his instructions and spiritual advice. He never eat till after sunset, and then very sparingly; but never any thing that had been dressed by fire, not so much as bread. In this manner did he live from the fortieth or forty-second to the ninetieth year of his age. For the reception of such as came to him from remote parts, he permitted a kind of hospital to be built near his cell or grotto, where some of his disciples took care of them. He was illustrious for miracles, and a wonderful spirit of prophecy, with the power of discovering to those that came to see him, their most secret thoughts and hidden sins. And such was the fame of his predictions, and the lustre of his miracles which he wrought on the sick, by sending them some oil which he had blessed, that they drew the admiration of the whole world upon him.

Theodosius the Elder was then emperor, and was attacked by the tyrant Maximus, become formidable by the success of his arms, having slain the emperor Gratian in 383, and dethroned Valentinian in 387. The pious emperor, finding his army much inferior to that of his adversary, caused this servant of God to be consulted concerning the success of the war against Maximus. Our saint foretold him that he should be victorious almost without blood. The emperor, full of confidence in the prediction, marched into the West, defeated the more numerous armies of Maximus twice in Pannonia; crossed the Alps, took the tyrant in Aquileia, and suffered his soldiers to cut off his head. He returned triumphant to Constantinople, and attributed his victories very much to the prayers of St. John, who also foretold him the events of his other wars, the incursions of barbarians, and all that was to befall his empire. Four years after, in 392, Eugenius, by the assistance of Arbogastes, who had murdered the emperor Valentinian the Younger, usurped the empire of the West. Theodosius sent Eutropius the Eunuch into Egypt, with instructions to bring St. John with him to Constantinople, if it was possible; but that if he could not prevail with him to undertake the journey, to consult whether it was God's will that he should march against Eugenius, or wait his arrival in the East. The man of God excused himself as to his journey

to court, but assured Eutropius that his prince should be victorious, but not without loss and blood: as also that he would die in Italy, and leave the empire of the West to his son; all which happened accordingly. Theodosius marched against Eugenius, and in the first engagement lost ten thousand men, and was almost defeated: but renewing the battle on the next day, the sixth of September, in 394, he gained an entire victory by the miraculous interposition of heaven, as even Claudian, the heathen poet, acknowledges. Theodosius died in the West, on the seventeenth of January, in 395, leaving his two sons emperors, Arcadius in the East, and Honorius in the West.

This saint restored sight to a senator's wife by some of the oil he had blessed for healing the sick. It being his inviolable custom never to admit any woman to speak to him, this gave occasion to a remarkable incident related by Evagrius, Palladius, and St. Austin in his treatise of Care for the dead. A certain general officer in the emperor's service visiting the saint, conjured him to permit his wife to speak to him; for she was come to Lycopolis, and had gone through many dangers and difficulties to enjoy that happiness. The holy man answered, that during his stricter enclosure for the last forty years since he had shut himself up in that rock, he had imposed on himself an inviolable rule not to see or converse with women; so he desired to be excused the granting her request. The officer returned to Lycopolis very melancholy. His wife, who was a person of great virtue, was not to be satisfied. The husband went back to the blessed man, told him that she would die of grief if he refused her request. The saint said to him: "Go to your wife, and tell her that "she shall see me to-night, without coming hither or stir- "ring out of her house." This answer he carried to her, and both were very earnest to know in what manner the saint would perform his promise. When she was asleep in the night, the man of God appeared to her in her dream, and said: "Your great faith, woman, obliged me to come "to visit you; but I must admonish you to curb the like "desires of seeing God's servants on earth. Contemplate "only their life, and imitate their actions. As for me, why

" did you desire to see me? Am I a saint or a prophet like " God's true servants? I am a sinful and weak man. It is " therefore only in virtue of your faith that I have had re- " course to our Lord, who grants you the cure of the corporal " diseases with which you are afflicted. Live always in the " fear of God, and never forget his benefits." He added several proper instructions for her conduct and disappeared. The woman awaking, described to her husband the person she had seen in her dream, with all his features, in such a manner as to leave no room to doubt but it was the blessed man that had appeared to her. Whereupon he returned the next day to give him thanks for the satisfaction he had vouchsafed his wife. But the saint on his arrival prevented him, saying: " I have fulfilled your desire, I have seen your wife, " and satisfied her in all things she had asked: go in peace." The officer received his benediction, and continued his journey to Seyne. What the man of God foretold happened to him, as, among other things, that he should receive particular honours from the emperor. Besides the authors of the saint's life, St. Austin relates this history which he received from a nobleman of great integrity and credit, who had it from the very persons to whom it happened. St. Austin adds, had he seen St. John, he would have enquired of him, whether he himself really appeared to this woman, or whether it was an angel in his shape, or whether the vision only passed in her imagination.[2]

In the year 394, a little before the saint's death, he was visited by Palladius, afterward bishop of Helenopolis, who is one of the authors of his life. Several anchorets of the deserts of Nitria, all strangers, the principal of whom were Evagrius, Albinus, Ammonius, had a great desire to see the saint. Palladius, one of this number, being young, set out first in July, when the flood of the Nile was high. Being arrived at his mountain, he found the door of his porch shut, and that it would not be open till the Saturday following. He waited that time in the lodgings of strangers. On Saturday, at eight o'clock, Palladius entered the porch, and saw the

[2] S. Aug. l. pro curâ de mortuis, c. 17. p. 294.

saint sitting before his window, and giving advice to those who applied to him for it. Having saluted Palladius by an interpreter, he asked him of what country he was, and what was his business, and if he was not of the company or monastery of Evagrius: Palladius owned he was. In the mean time arrived Alypius, governor of the province, in great haste. The saint, on the arrival of Alypius, broke off his discourse with Palladius, who withdrew to make room for the governor to discourse with the saint. Their conversation was very long, and Palladius being weary, murmured within himself against the venerable old man, as guilty of exception of persons. He was even just going away, when the saint, knowing his secret thoughts, sent Theodorus, his interpreter to him, saying: "Go, bid that brother not to be impatient: I "am going to dismiss the governor, and then will speak to "him." Palladius, astonished that his thoughts should be known to him, waited with patience. As soon as Alypius was gone, St. John called Palladius, and said to him: "Why was "you angry, imputing to me in your mind what I was no way "guilty of? To you I can speak at any other time, and you "have many fathers and brethren to comfort and direct you "in the paths of salvation. But this governor being involved "in the hurry of temporal affairs, and being come to receive "some wholesome advice during the short time his affairs "will allow him time to breathe in, how could I give you the "preference?" He then told Palladius what passed in his heart and his secret temptations to quit his solitude; for which end the devil represented to him his father's regret for his absence, and that he might induce his brother and sister to embrace a solitary life. The holy man bade him despise such suggestions; for they had both already renounced the world, and his father would yet live seven years. He foretold him that he should meet with great persecutions and sufferings, and should be a bishop, but with many afflictions: all which came to pass, though at that time extremely improbable.

The same year, St. Petronius, with six other monks, made a long journey to pay St. John a visit. He asked them if any amongst them was in holy orders. They said: No. One how-

ever, the youngest in the company, was a deacon, though this was unknown to the rest. The saint, by divine instinct, knew this circumstance, and that the deacon had concealed his orders out of a false humility, not to seem superior to the others, but their inferior, as he was in age. Therefore, pointing to him, he said: "This man is a deacon." The other denied it, upon the false persuasion that to lie with a view to one's own humiliation was no sin. St. John took him by the hand, and kissing it, said to him: "My son, take care never "to deny the grace you have received from God, lest humi- "lity betray you into a lie. We must never lie, under any "pretence of good whatever, because no untruth can be from "God." The deacon received this rebuke with great respect. After their prayer together, one of the company begged of the saint to be cured of a tertian ague. He answered: "You desire to be freed from a sickness which is beneficial "to you. As nitre cleanses the body, so distempers and other "chastisements purify the soul." However, he blessed some oil and gave it to him: he vomited plentifully after it, and was from that moment perfectly cured. They returned to their lodgings, where, by his orders, they were treated with all proper civility, and cordial hospitality. When they went to him again, he received them with joyfulness in his countenance, which evidenced the interior spiritual joy of his soul; he bade them sit down, and asked them whence they came. They said from Jerusalem. He then made them a long discourse, in which he first endeavoured to shew his own baseness; after which he explained the means by which pride and vanity are to be banished out of the heart, and all virtues to be acquired. He related to them the examples of many monks, who, by suffering their hearts to be secretly corrupted by vanity, at last fell also into scandalous irregularities; as of one, who, after a most holy and austere life, by this means fell into fornication, and then by despair into all manner of disorders: also of another, who from vanity fell into a desire of leaving his solitude; but by a sermon he preached to others, in a monastery on his road, was mercifully converted, and became an eminent penitent. The blessed John thus entertained Petronius and his company for three days till

the hour of None. When they were leaving him, he gave them his blessing, and said: "Go in peace, my children; "and know that the news of the victory which the religious "prince Theodosius has gained over the tyrant Eugenius is "this day come to Alexandria: but this excellent emperor "will soon end his life by a natural death." Some days after their leaving him to return home they were informed he had departed this life. Having been favoured by a foresight of his death, he would see nobody for the last three days. At the end of this term he sweetly expired, being on his knees at prayer, towards the close of the year 394, or the beginning of 395. It might probably be on the seventeenth of October, on which day the Copths, or Egyptian Christians, keep his festival: the Roman and other Latin Martyrologies mark it on the twenty-seventh of March.

The solitude which the Holy Ghost recommends, and which the saints embraced, resembled that of Jesus Christ, being founded in the same motives or principle, and having the same exercises and employments, and the same end. Christ was conducted by the Holy Ghost into the desert, and he there spent his time in prayer and fasting. Woe to those whom humour or passion lead into solitude, or who consecrate it not to God by mortification, sighs of penance, and hymns of divine praise. To those who thus sanctify their desert, or cell, it will be an anticipated paradise, an abyss of spiritual advantages and comforts, known only to such as have enjoyed them. *The Lord will change the desert into a place of delights, and will make the solitude a paradise and a garden worthy of himself.*[1] In it only joy and jubilee shall be seen, nothing shall be heard but thanksgiving and praise. It is the dwelling of a terrestrial seraph, whose sole employment is to labour to know, and correct, all secret disorders of his own soul, to forget the world, and all objects of vanity which could distract or entangle him; to subdue his senses, to purify the faculties of his soul, and entertain in his heart a constant fire of devotion, by occupying it assiduously on God, Jesus Christ, and heavenly things, and banishing all

[1] Isa. lxiii.

superfluous desires and thoughts; lastly, to make daily progress in purity of conscience, humility, mortification, recollection, and prayer, and to find all his joy in the most fervent and assiduous adoration, love, and praise of his sovereign Creator and Redeemer.

SAINT RUPERT, OR ROBERT, C.

BISHOP OF SALTZBOURG.

He was by birth a Frenchman, and of royal blood; but still more illustrious for his learning and the extraordinary virtues he practised from his youth. He exercised himself in austere fasting, watching, and other mortifications; was a great lover of chastity and temperance; and so charitable, as always to impoverish himself to enrich the poor. His reputation drew persons from remote provinces to receive his advice and instructions. He removed all their doubts and scruples, comforted the afflicted, cured the sick, and healed the disorders of souls. So distinguished a merit raised him to the episcopal see of Worms. But that people being for the most part idolaters, could not bear the lustre of such a sanctity, which condemned their irregularities and superstitions. They beat him with rods, loaded him with all manner of outrages, and expelled him the city. But God prepared for him another harvest. Theodon, duke of Bavaria, hearing of his reputation and miracles, sent messengers to him, earnestly beseeching him to come and preach the gospel to the Baioarians, or Bavarians. This happened two years after his expulsion from Worms: during which interval he had made a journey to Rome. He was received at Ratisbon by Theodon and his court with all possible distinction, in 697, and found the hearts both of the nobles and people docile to the word of God. The christian faith had been planted in that country two hundred years before, by St. Severinus, the apostle of Noricum. After his death, heresies and heathenish superstitions had entirely extinguished the light of the gospel. Bagintrude, sister of duke Theodon, being a Christian, disposed her brother and the whole country to receive the faith. Rupert, with the help of other zealous priests, whom

he had brought with him, instructed, and, after a general fast, baptized, the duke Theodon, and the lords and people of the whole country. God confirmed his preaching by many miracles. He converted also to Christianity the neighbouring nations. After Ratisbon the capital, the second chief seat of his labours was Laureacum, now called Lorch,[a] where he healed several diseases by prayer, and made many converts. However, it was not Lorch, nor the old Reginum, thence called Regensbourg, now Ratisbon, the capital of all those provinces, that was pitched upon to be the seat of the saint's bishoprick, but the old Juvavia, then almost in ruins, since rebuilt and called Saltzbourg. The duke Theodon adorned and enriched it with many magnificent donations, which enabled St. Rupert to found there several rich churches and monasteries. After that prince's death, his son Theodebert, or Diotper, inheriting his zeal and piety, augmented considerably the revenues of this church. St. Rupert took a journey into France to procure a new supply of able labourers, and brought back to Saltzbourg twelve holy missionaries with his niece St. Erentrude, a virgin consecrated to God, for whom he built a great monastery, called Nunberg, of which she was the first abbess.[b] St. Rupert laboured several years in this see, and died happily on Easter-day, which fell that year on the twenty-seventh of March, after he had said mass and preached; on which day the Roman and other Martyrologies mention him. His principal festival is kept with the greatest solemnity in Austria and Bavaria, on the twenty-fifth of September, the day of one of the translations of his relicks, which are kept in the church under his name in Saltzbourg. Mabillon and Bulteau, upon no slight grounds, think this saint to have lived a whole century later than is commonly supposed, and that he founded the church of Saltzbourg about the year 700. See his life, published by

[a] A village on the Danube, in the midway between Ratisbon and Vienna, the capital of eastern Bavaria, at present Austria.

[b] The bishop of Saltzbourg was, under Charlemagne, made an archbishop and metropolitan of Bavaria, Austria, and its hereditary territories. He is one of the first ecclesiastical princes of the empire, and is elected by the canons of the cathedral, who are all of noble extraction.

Canisius, Henschenius, and Mabillon, with the notes of the last-mentioned editor.

MARCH XXVIII.

PRISCUS, MALCHUS, AND ALEXANDER, MARTYRS.

From Eus. Hist. b. 7. c. 12. p. 262.

A. D. 260.

THESE eminent Christians, Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander, led a retired holy life in the country near Cæsarea, in Palestine. During the fury of the persecution under Valerian, they often called to mind the triumphs of the martyrs, and secretly reproached themselves with cowardice, as living like soldiers who passed their time in softness and ease, whilst their brethren and fellow-warriors bore all the heat of the battle. They could not long smother these warm sentiments in their breast; but expressed them to one another. "What, "said they, whilst the secure gate of heaven is open, shall "we shut it against ourselves? Shall we be so faint-hearted "as not to suffer for the name of Christ, who died for us? "Our brethren invite us by their example: their blood is a "loud voice, which presses us to tread in their steps. Shall "we be deaf to a cry calling us to the combat, and to a glo-"rious victory?" Full of this holy ardour, they all with one mind repaired to Cæsarea, and of their own accord, by a particular instinct of grace, presented themselves before the governor, declaring themselves Christians. Whilst all others were struck with admiration at the sight of their generous courage, the barbarous judge appeared not able to contain his rage. After having tried on them all the tortures which he employed on other martyrs, he condemned them to be

exposed to wild beasts. They are honoured on this day in the Roman Martyrology.

In consecrating ourselves to the service of God, and to his pure love, the first and most essential condition is that we do it without reserve, with an earnest desire of attaining to the perfection of our state, and a firm resolution of sparing nothing, and being deterred by no difficulties from pursuing this end with our whole strength: and it must be our chief care constantly to maintain, and always increase, this desire in our souls. Upon this condition depends all our spiritual progress. This is more essential in a religious state than the vows themselves; and it is this which makes the difference betwixt the fervent and the lukewarm Christian. Many deceive themselves in this particular, and flatter themselves their resolution of aspiring after perfection, with all their strength, is sincere, whereas it is very imperfect. Of this we can best judge by their earnestness to advance in a spirit of prayer, and in becoming truly spiritual; in crucifying self-love, overcoming their failings, and cutting off all occasions of dissipation, and all impediments of their spiritual advancement. Mortification and prayer, which are the principal means, present usually the greatest difficulties: but these, as St. Terasa observes, are better than half vanquished and removed by a firm resolution of not being discouraged by any obstacles, but of gathering from them fresh vigour and strength. Patience and fortitude crown in the saints what this fervent resolution began.

ST. SIXTUS III. POPE.

He was a priest among the Roman clergy in 418, when pope Zozimus condemned the Pelagian heretics. Sixtus was the first, after this sentence, who pronounced publicly anathema against them, to stop their slander in Africa that he favoured their doctrine, as we are assured by St. Austin and St. Prosper in his chronicle. The former sent him two congratulatory letters the same year, in which he applauds this testimony of his zeal, and in the first of these letters professes

an high esteem of a treatise wrote by him in defence of the grace of God against its enemies. It was that calumny of the Pelagian heretics that led Garnier into the mistake that our saint at first favoured their errors. But a change of this kind would not have been buried in silence. After the death of St. Celestine, Sixtus was chosen pope in 432. He wrote to Nestorius to endeavour to reclaim him after his condemnation at Ephesus, in 431: but his heart was hardened, and he stopped his ears against all wholesome admonitions. The pope had the comfort to see a happy reconciliation made, by his endeavours, between the Orientals and St. Cyril: in which he much commended the humility and pacific dispositions of the latter. He says "that he was charged with "the care and solicitude of all the churches in the world,[1] "and that it is unlawful for any one to abandon the faith of "the apostolic Roman church, in which St. Peter teaches in "his successors what he received from Christ."[2] When Bassus, a nobleman of Rome, had been condemned by the emperor, and excommunicated by a synod of bishops for raising a grievous slander against the good pope, the meek servant of Christ visited and assisted him in person, administered him the Viaticum in his last sickness, and buried him with his own hands. Julian of Eclanum or Eculanum, the famous Pelagian, earnestly desiring to recover his see, made great efforts to be admitted to the communion of the church; pretending that he was become a convert, and used several artifices to convince our saint that he really was so: but he was too well acquainted with them to be imposed on. This holy pope died soon after, on the twenty-eighth of March, in 440, having sat in the see near eight years. See his letters, Anastasius's Pontifical, with the notes of Bianchini, &c.

ST. GONTRAN, KING AND CONFESSOR.

He was son of king Clotaire, and grandson of Clovis I. and St. Clotildis. Being the second son, whilst his brothers Charibert reigned at Paris, and Sigebert in Austrasia residing

[1] Ep. 1. ad Episc. Orient. p. 1236. Ep. decret. t. 1.—[2] Ep. 6. ad Joan. Antioch. contra Nestor.

at Metz, he was crowned king of Orleans and Burgundy in 561, making Challons on the Saone his capital. When compelled to take up arms against his ambitious brothers and the Lombards, he made no other use of his victories under the conduct of a brave general called Mommol, than to give peace to his dominions. He protected his nephews against the practices of the wicked dowager queens Brunehault of Sigebert, and Fredegonde of Chilperic, the firebrands of France. The putting to death the physicians of the queen at her request, on her death-bed, and the divorcing his wife Mercatrude, are crimes laid to his charge, in which the barbarous manners of his nation involved him: but these he effaced by tears of repentance. He governed his kingdom, studying rather to promote the temporal happiness of others than his own, a stranger to the passions of pride, jealousy, and ambition, and making piety the only rule of his policy. The prosperity of his reign, both in peace and war, condemns those who think that human policy cannot be modelled by the maxims of the gospel, whereas nothing can render a government more flourishing. He always treated the pastors of the church with respect and veneration, regarding them as his fathers, and honouring and consulting them as his masters. He was the protector of the oppressed, and the tender parent of his subjects, whom he treated as his children. He poured out his treasures among them with a holy profusion; especially in the time of a pestilence and famine. He gave the greatest attention to the care of the sick. He fasted, prayed, wept, and offered himself to God night and day, as a victim ready to be sacrificed on the altar of his justice, to avert his indignation, which he believed he himself had provoked, and drawn down upon his innocent people. He was a severe punisher of crimes in his officers and others, and, by many wholesome regulations, restrained the barbarous licentiousness of his troops; but no man was more ready to forgive offences against his own person. He contented himself with imprisoning a man who, through the instigation of queen Fredegonde, had attempted to stab him, and he spared another assassin sent by the same wicked woman, because he had taken shelter in a church. With royal magnificence he

built and endowed many churches and monasteries. St. Gregory of Tours relates many miracles performed by him both before and after his death, to some of which he was an eye-witness. This good king, like another penitent David, having spent his life after his conversion, though on the throne, in the retirement and penance of a recluse (as St. Hugh of Cluny says of him, exhorting king Philip I. to imitate his example) died on the twenty-eighth of March in 593, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, having reigned thirty-one, and some months. He was buried in the church of St. Marcellus, which he had founded. The Huguenots scattered his ashes in the sixteenth century: only his skull escaped their fury, and is now kept there in a silver case. He is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology. See St. Gregory of Tours, Fredegarius, and Baillet.

MARCH XXIX.



SAINTS JONAS, BARACHISIUS, AND THEIR COMPANIONS, MM.

From their genuine acts compiled by Esaias, a noble Armenian knight in the troops of king Sapor, an eye-witness; published in the original Chaldaic, by Stephen Assemani, Act. Mart. Orient. t. 1. p. 211. They were much adulterated by the Greeks in Metaphrastes. Ruinart and Tillemont think Sapor raised no persecution before his fortieth year: but Assemani proves from these acts, and several other monuments, a persecution in his eighteenth year. See Præf. Gen. and p. 214. app.

A. D. 327.

KING Sapor, in the eighteenth year of his reign, raised a bloody persecution against the Christians, and demolished their churches and monasteries. Jonas and Barachisius, two brothers of the city Beth-Asa, hearing that several Christians

lay under sentence of death at Hubaham, went thither to encourage and serve them. Nine of that number received the crown of martyrdom. After their execution, Jonas and Barachisius were apprehended for having exhorted them to die. The president mildly entreated the two brothers to obey the king of kings, meaning the king of Persia, and to worship the sun, moon, fire, and water. Their answer was, that it was more reasonable to obey the immortal King of heaven and earth than a mortal prince. The Magians were much offended to hear their king called mortal. By their advice the martyrs were separated, and Barachisius was cast into a very narrow close dungeon. Jonas they detained with them, endeavouring to persuade him to sacrifice to fire, the sun, and water. The prince of the Magians seeing him inflexible, caused him to be laid flat on his belly with a stake under his navel, and to be beaten both with knotty clubs and with rods. The martyr all the time continued in prayer, saying: "I thank you, O God of our father Abraham. En-"able me, I beseech you, to offer to you acceptable holo-"causts. *One thing I have asked of the Lord: this will I seek "after.*[1] The sun, moon, fire, and water I renounce: I be-"lieve and confess the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The judge ordered him next to be set in a frozen pond, with a cord tied to his foot. After supper, and a short nap, he sent for Barachisius, and told him his brother had sacrificed. The martyr said it was impossible that he should have paid divine honours to fire, a vile creature, and spoke much on the immensity and power of God, and with such eloquence and force that the Magians were astonished to hear him, and said one to another, that if he were permitted to speak in public, he would draw over many from their religion. Whereupon they concluded for the future to hold his interrogatories in the night. In the mean time they caused two red-hot iron plates, and two red-hot hammers, to be applied under each, arm, and said to him; "If you shake off either of these, by "the king's fortune, you deny Christ." He meekly replied: "I fear not your fire; nor shall I throw off your instruments

[1] Ps. xxvi. 4.

" of torture. I beg you to try without delay all your torments " on me. He who is engaged in combat for God is full of " courage." They ordered melted lead to be dropped into his nostrils and eyes; and that he should then be carried to prison, and there hung up by one foot. Jonas, after this, being brought out of his pool, the Magians said to him: " How " do you find yourself this morning? We imagine you past " the last night but very uncomfortably." " No," replied Jonas: " from the day I came into the world, I never re- " member a night more sweet and agreeable: for, I was " wonderfully refreshed by the remembrance of Christ's suf- " ferings." The Magians said: " Your companion hath re- " nounced." The martyr, interrupting them, answered: " I know that he hath long ago renounced the devil and his " angels." The Magians urged: " Take care lest you perish, " abandoned both by God and man." Jonas replied: " If " you are really wise, as you boast, judge if it be not better " to sow the corn than to keep it hoarded up. Our life is a " seed sown to rise again in the world to come, when it will " be renewed by Christ in immortal light." The Magians said: " Your books have drawn many aside." Jonas answered: " They have indeed drawn many from worldly plea- " sures. When a servant of Christ is in his sufferings ine- " briated with love from the passion of his Lord, he forgets " the transitory state of this short life, its riches, estates, gold, " and honours; regardless of kings and princes, lords and " noblemen, where an eternity is at stake, he desires nothing " but the sight of the only true King, whose empire is ever- " lasting, and whose power reaches to all ages." The judges commanded all his fingers and toes to be cut off, joint by joint, and scattered about. Then they said to him: " Now " wait the harvest to reap other hands from this seed." To whom he said: " Other hands I do not ask. God is " present, who first framed me, and who will give me new " strength." After this, the skin was torn off the martyr's head, his tongue was cut out, and he was thrown into a vessel of boiling pitch; but the pitch by a sudden ebullition running over, the servant of God was not hurt by it. The judges next ordered him to be squeezed in a wooden press till his veins,

sinews, and fibres burst. Lastly, his body was sawn with an iron saw, and, by pieces, thrown into a dry cistern. Guards were appointed to watch the sacred relicks, lest Christians should steal them away. The judges then called upon Barachisius to spare his own body. To whom he said: "This "body I did not frame, neither will I destroy it. God its "maker will again restore it; and will judge you and your "king." Hormisdatscirus, turning to Maharnarses, said: "By our delays we affront the king. These men regard "neither words nor torments." They therefore agreed that he should be beaten with sharp-pointed rushes; then that splinters of reeds should be applied to his body, and by cords strait drawn and pulled, should be pressed deep into his flesh, and that in this condition his body pierced all over with sharp spikes, armed like a porcupine, should be rolled on the ground. After these tortures, he was put into the screw or press, and boiling pitch and brimstone were poured into his mouth. By this last torment he obtained a crown equal to that of his brother. Under their most exquisite tortures they thought they bought heaven too cheap. Upon the news of their death, Abtusciatus, an old friend, came and purchased their bodies for five hundred drachms and three silk garments, binding himself also by oath never to divulge the sale. The acts are closed by these words: "This book was "written from the mouths of witnesses, and contains the acts "of the saints, Jonas, Barachisius, and others, martyrs of "Christ, who by his succour fought, triumphed, and were "crowned, in whose prayers we beg place may be found by "Esaias, son of Adabus of Arzun, in Armenia, of the troop "of royal horsemen, who was present at their interrogato-"ries and tortures, and who wrote the history of their con-"flicts." They were crowned on the twenty-ninth of the "moon of December. This was the twenty-fourth of that month, in the year of Christ 327, of Sapor II. the eighteenth. The Roman Martyrology mentions them on the twenty-ninth of March.

Those powerful motives, which supported the martyrs under the sharpest torments, ought to inspire us with patience,

resignation, and holy joy, under sickness and all crosses or trials. These are the times of the greatest spiritual harvest, by the exercise of the most perfect virtues. For nothing is more heroic in the practice of christian virtue, nothing more precious in the sight of God, than the sacrifice of patience, submission, constant fidelity, and charity in a state of suffering. Under sickness we are too apt eagerly to desire health, that we may be able to do something for God, and to discharge the obligations of our profession, as we persuade ourselves. This is a mere invention of self-love, which is impatient under the weight of humiliation. Nothing indeed is more severe to nature than such a state of death, and there is nothing which it is not desirous of doing, to recover that active life, which carries an air of importance by making an appearance in the tumultuous scene of the world. But how much does the soul generally lose by such an exchange! Ah! did we but truly know how great are the spiritual advantages and riches, and how great the glory of patience founded upon motives of true charity, and how precious the victories and triumphs are which it gains over self-love, we should rejoice too much in a state of suffering and humiliation ever to entertain any inordinate desires of changing it. We should only ask for health in sickness under this condition, if it be more expedient for God's honour and our spiritual advancement. With St. Paul, we should find a joy and delight in a state of privation and suffering, in which we enter into a true sense of our absolute weakness, feel that we are nothing, and have no reliance but on God alone.

SS. ARMOGASTES, ARCHINIMUS, AND SATURUS, MARTYRS.

Genseric, the Arian king of the Vandals, in Africa, having, on his return out of Italy, in 457, enacted new penal laws, and severer than any he had till then put in force against Catholics, count Armogastes was on that occasion deprived of his honours and dignities at court, and most cruelly tortured. But no sooner had the jailers bound him with cords, but they broke of themselves, as the martyr lifted up his eyes to

heaven; and this happened several times. And though they afterward hung him up by one foot with his head downwards for a considerable time, the saint was no more affected by this torment than if he had lain all the while at his ease on a feather-bed. Theodoric, the king's son, thereupon ordered his head to be struck off: but one of his Arian priests diverted him from it, advising him to take other measures with him to prevent his being looked upon as a martyr by those of his party, which would be of disservice to the opposite cause. He was therefore sent into Byzacena to work in the mines; and, sometime after, for his greater disgrace, he was removed thence into the neighbourhood of Carthage, and employed in keeping cows. But he looked upon it as his glory to be dishonoured before men in the cause of God. It was not long before he had a revelation that his end drew near. So having foretold the time of his death, and given orders to a devout Christian about the place where he desired to be interred, the holy confessor, a few days after, went to receive the rewards of those that suffer in the cause of truth.

Archinimus, of the city Mascula, in Numidia, resisted all the artifices which the king could use to overcome his faith, and was condemned to be beheaded, but was reprieved whilst he stood under the axe. Satur, or Saturus, was master of the household to Huneric, by whom he was threatened to be deprived of his estate, goods, slaves, wife and children, for his faith. His own wife omitted nothing in her power to prevail with him to purchase his pardon at the expense of his conscience. But he courageously answered her in the words of Job: *You have spoken like one of the foolish women.*[1] "If "you loved me, you would give me different advice, and not "push me on to a second death. Let them do their worst: "I will always remember our Lord's words: *If any man come* "*to me, and hate not his father and mother, his wife and chil-*"*dren, his brethren and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot* "*be my disciple.*"[2] He suffered many torments, was stripped of all his substance, forbid ever to appear in public, and reduced to great distress. But God enriched him with his

[1] Job ii. 9.—[2] Luke xiv. 26.

graces, and called him to himself. See St. Victor Vitensis, Hist. Persec. Vandal. l. 1. n. 14.

S. EUSTASIUS, OR EUSTACHIUS, ABBOT OF LUXEU,

Succeeded his master St. Columban in that charge, in 611. He sanctified himself by humility, continual prayer, watching, and fasting; was the spiritual father of six hundred monks, and of many holy bishops and saints, and died in 625. He is named in the Martyrologies of Ado, and in the Roman. See his life by Jonas, his colleague, in the Bollandists, and in Mabillon.

ST. GUNDLEUS, C.

This saint, who was formerly honoured with great devotion in Wales, was son to the king of the Dimetians in South-Wales. After the death of his father, though the eldest son, he divided the kingdom with his six brothers, who nevertheless respected and obeyed him as if he had been their sovereign. He married Gladusa, daughter of Braghan, prince of that country, which is called from him Brecknockshire, and was father of St. Canoc and St. Keyna. St. Gundleus had by her the great St. Cadoc, who afterward founded the famous monastery of Llancarvan, three miles from Cowbridge, in Glamorganshire. Gundleus lived so as to have always in view the heavenly kingdom for which we are created by God. To secure this, he retired wholly from the world long before his death, and passed his time in a solitary little dwelling near a church which he had built. His clothing was sackcloth, his food barley-bread, upon which he usually strewed ashes, and his drink was water. Prayer and contemplation were his constant occupation, to which he rose at midnight, and he subsisted by the labour of his hands: thus he lived many years. Some days before his death he sent for St. Dubritius and his son St. Cadoc, and by their assistance, and the holy rites of the church, prepared himself for his passage to eternity. He departed to our Lord toward the end of the fifth century, and was glorified by miracles. See his life in Cap-

grave and Henschenius, from the collection of John of Tinmouth. See also bishop Usher.

ST. MARK, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR.

Some Greeks rank among the saints on this day Mark, Bishop of Arethusa, in Syria, in the fourth age. When Constantius put to death his uncle Julius Constantius, brother of Constantine the Great, with his eldest son: the two younger, Gallus and Julian, narrowly escaped the sword. In that danger Mark concealed Julian, and secretly supplied him with necessaries for his subsistence. When Julian became emperor, he commanded that the temples which had been demolished by Christians, during the two preceding reigns, should be rebuilt at their expenses. Mark had, by the authority of Constantius, demolished a very magnificent temple which was held in great veneration by the idolaters: he had also built a church, and converted a great number of infidels. Authorized by the law of Julian, the heathens of Arethusa, when they saw themselves uppermost, fell on the Christians; and Mark, finding that they were ready to shew their resentment against him in particular, which they had long concealed, he at first, pursuant to the gospel precept, betook himself to flight to escape their fury. But understanding that they had apprehended some of his flock instead of him, he returned and delivered himself up to the persecutors, to animate others in the same cause by his example and instructions. They seized him soon after his return, dragged him through the streets by the hair, or any part they could lay hold of, without the least compassion for his age, or regard for his virtue and learning. Having stript him, and scourged him all over his body, joining ignominy and insults with cruelty, they threw him into the stinking public jakes. Having taken him from thence, they left him to the children, ordering them to prick and pierce him, without mercy, with their writing-styles, or steel pencils. They bound his legs with cords so tight, as to cut and bruise his flesh to the very bone; they rang off his ears with small strong threads; and in this maimed bloody condition they pushed him from one to an-

other. After this they rubbed him over with honey and fat broth; and shutting him up in a kind of cage, hung him up in the air where the sun was most scorching, at noon-day, in the midst of summer, in order to draw the wasps and gnats upon him, whose stings are exceeding sharp and piercing in those hot countries. He was so calm in the midst of his sufferings, that, though so sorely wounded and covered with flies and wasps, he bantered them as he hung in the air; telling them, that while they were grovelling on the earth, he was raised by them towards heaven. They frequently solicited him to rebuild their temple, but though they reduced their demands by degrees to a trifling sum, he constantly answered, that it would be an impiety to give them one farthing towards such a work. This indeed would be to concur to idolatrous worship: but his demolishing the temple would have been against the order of law and justice, had he done it without public authority. At length the fury of the people was turned into admiration of his patience, and they set him at liberty; and several of them afterward begged of him to instruct them in the principles of a religion which was capable of inspiring such a resolution. Having spent the remainder of his life, in the faithful discharge of the duties of his station, he died in peace under Jovian or Valens. He is not named in the Roman Martyrology, nor venerated by the church among the saints. He had been long engaged in the errors and intrigues of the Semi-Arians; but the encomiums given him by St. Gregory Nazianzen, Theodoret, and Sozomen, when they relate his sufferings, shew that towards the end of the reign of Constantius, he joined in the orthodox communion.

MARCH XXX.

ST. JOHN CLIMACUS, ABBOT.

From his life written by Daniel, a monk of Raithu, soon after his death, and from his own works. See Bulteau, Hist. monast. d'Orient, and d'Andilly, or rather his nephew, Le Maitre, in his life prefixed to the French translation of his works. See also Jos. Assemani, in Cal. Univ. ad 30 Martii. t. 6. p. 213.

A. D. 605.

St. John, generally distinguished by the appellation of Climacus, from his excellent book entitled Climax, or the Ladder to Perfection, was born about the year 525, probably in Palestine. By his extraordinary progress in the arts and sciences, he obtained very young the surname of the Scholastic. But at sixteen years of age he renounced all the advantages which the world promised him, to dedicate himself to God in a religious state, in 547. He retired to Mount Sinai, which, from the time of the disciples of St. Antony and St. Hilarion, had been always peopled by holy men, who, in imitation of Moses, when he received the law on that mountain, lived in the perpetual contemplation of heavenly things. Our novice, fearing the danger of dissipation and relaxation, to which numerous communities are generally more exposed than others, chose not to live in the great monastery on the summit, but in an hermitage on the descent of the mountain, under the discipline of Martyrius, an holy ancient anchoret. By silence, he curbed the insolent itch of talking about every thing, an ordinary vice in learned men, but usually a mark of pride and self-sufficiency. By perfect humility and obedience, he banished the dangerous desire of self-complacency in his actions. He never contradicted, never disputed with any one. So perfect was his submission, that he seemed to have no self-

will. He undertook to sail through the deep sea of this mortal life securely, under the direction of a prudent guide, and shunned those rocks which he could not have escaped, had he presumed to steer alone, as he tells us.[1] From the visible mountain he raised his heart, without interruption, in all his actions, to God, who is invisible; and, attentive to all the motions of his grace, studied only to do his will. Four years he spent in the trial of his own strength, and in learning the obligations of his state, before he made his religious profession, which was in the twentieth year of his age. In his writings, he severely condemns engagements made by persons too young, or before a sufficient probation. By fervent prayer and fasting he prepared himself for the solemn consecration of himself to God, that the most intense fervour might make his holocaust the more perfect: and from that moment he seemed to be renewed in spirit; and his master admired the strides with which, like a mighty giant, the young disciple advanced, daily more and more towards God by self-denial, obedience, humility, and the uninterrupted exercises of divine love and prayer.

In the year 560, and the thirty-fifth of his age, he lost Martyrius by death; having then spent nineteen years in that place in penance and holy contemplation. By the advice of a prudent director, he then embraced an eremitical life in a plain called Thole, near the foot of Mount Sinai. His cell was five miles from the church, probably the same which had been built a little before, by order of the emperor Justinian, for the use of the monks, at the bottom of this mountain, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, as Procopius mentions.[2] Thither he went every Saturday and Sunday to assist, with all the other anchorets and monks of that desert, at the holy office and at the celebration of the divine mysteries, when they all communicated. His diet was very sparing, though, to shun ostentation and the danger of vain-glory, he eat of every thing that was allowed among the monks of Egypt, who universally abstained from flesh, fish, &c. Prayer was his principal employment; and he practised what he earnestly

[1] Gr. 1.—[2] Procop. l. 5. de ædif. Justin.

recommends to all Christians, that in all their actions, thoughts, and words, they should keep themselves with great fervour in the presence of God, and direct all they do to his holy will.[3] By habitual contemplation he acquired an extraordinary purity of heart, and such a facility of lovingly beholding God in all his works, that this practice seemed in him a second nature. Thus he accompanied his studies with perpetual prayer. He assiduously read the holy scriptures, and fathers, and was one of the most learned doctors of the church. But, to preserve the treasure of humility, he concealed, as much as possible, both his natural and acquired talents, and the extraordinary graces with which the Holy Ghost enriched his soul. By this secrecy he fled from the danger of vain-glory, which, like a leech, sticks to our best actions, and sucking from them its nourishment, robs us of their fruit. As if this cell had not been sufficiently remote from the eyes of men, St. John frequently retired into a neighbouring cavern, which he had made in the rock, where no one could come to disturb his devotions, or interrupt his tears. So ardent were his charity and compunction, that his eyes seemed two fountains, which scarce ever ceased to flow; and his continual sighs and groans to heaven, under the weight of the miseries inseparable from his mortal pilgrimage, were not to be equalled by the vehemency of the cries of those who suffer from knives and fire. Overcome by importunities, he admitted a holy anchoret named Moyses to live with him as his disciple.

God bestowed on St. John an extraordinary grace of healing the spiritual disorders of souls. Among others, a monk called Isaac, was brought almost to the brink of despair by most violent temptations of the flesh. He addressed himself to St. John, who perceived by his tears how much he underwent from that conflict and struggle which he felt within himself. The servant of God commended his faith, and said: "My son, let us have recourse to God by prayer." They accordingly prostrated themselves together on the ground in fervent supplication for a deliverance, and from that time

[3] S. Jo. Clim. gr. 27. n. 67.

the infernal serpent left Isaac in peace. Many others resorted to St. John for spiritual advice: but the devil excited some to jealousy, who censured him as one who, out of vanity, lost much time in unprofitable discourse. The saint took this accusation, which was a mere calumny, in good part, and as a charitable admonition; he therefore imposed on himself a rigorous silence for near a twelvemonth. This his humility and modesty so much astonished his calumniators, that they joined the rest of the monks in beseeching him to reassume his former function of giving charitable advice to all that resorted to him for it, and not to bury that talent of science which he had received for the benefit of many. He who knew not what it was to contradict others, with the same humility and deference again opened his mouth to instruct his neighbour in the rules of perfect virtue: in which office, such was the reputation of his wisdom and experience, that he was regarded as another Moses in that holy place.

St. John was now seventy-five years old, and had spent forty of them in his hermitage, when, in the year six hundred, he was unanimously chosen abbot of Mount Sinai, and superior general of all the monks and hermits in that country. Soon after he was raised to this dignity, the people of Palestine and Arabia, in the time of a great drought and famine, made their application to him as to another Elias, begging him to intercede with God in their behalf. The saint failed not with great earnestness to recommend their distress to the father of mercies, and his prayer was immediately recompensed with abundant rains. St. Gregory the Great, who then sat in St. Peter's chair, wrote to our holy abbot,[4] recommending himself to his prayers, and sent him beds, with other furniture and money, for his hospital, for the use of pilgrims near Mount Sinai. John, who had used his utmost endeavours to decline the pastoral charge, when he saw it laid upon him, neglected no means which might promote the sanctification of all those who were intrusted to his care. That posterity might receive some share in the benefit of his holy instructions, John, the learned and virtuous abbot of

[4] St. Greg. l. 11. Ep. 1. l. 12. Ep. 16. t. 2. p. 1091.

Raithu, a monastery situate towards the Red-Sea, entreated him by that obedience he had ever practised, even with regard to his inferiors, that he would draw up the most necessary rules by which fervent souls might arrive at christian perfection. The saint answered him, that nothing but extreme humility could have moved him to write to so miserable a sinner, destitute of every sort of virtue; but that he received his commands with respect, though far above his strength, never considering his own insufficiency. Wherefore, apprehensive of falling into death by disobedience, he took up his pen in haste, with great eagerness mixed with fear, and set himself to draw some imperfect outlines as an unskilful painter, leaving them to receive from him, as a great master, the finishing strokes. This produced the excellent work which he called Climax, or the ladder of religious perfection. This book being written in sentences, almost in the manner of aphorisms, abounds more in sense than words. A certain majestic simplicity, an inexpressible unction and spirit of humility, joined with conciseness and perspicuity, very much enhance the value of this performance: but its chief merit consists in the sublime sentiments, and perfect description of all christian virtues, which it contains. The author confirms his precepts by several edifying examples, as of obedience and penance.[5] In describing a monastery of three hundred and thirty monks, which he had visited near Alexandria in Egypt, he mentions one of the principal citizens of that city, named Isidore, who petitioning to be admitted into the house, said to the abbot: "As iron is in the "hands of the smith, so am I in your hands." The abbot ordered him to remain without the gate, and to prostrate himself at the feet of every one that passed by, begging their prayers for his soul struck with a leprosy. Thus he passed seven years in profound humility and patience. He told St. John, that during the first year he always considered himself as a slave condemned for his sins, and sustained violent conflicts. The second year he passed in tranquillity and confidence; and the third with relish and pleasure in his humi-

[5] Gr. 4 and 5.

liations. So great was his virtue, that the abbot determined to present him to the bishop in order to be promoted to the priesthood, but the humility of the holy penitent prevented the execution of that design; for having begged at least a respite, he died within ten days. St. John could not help admiring the cook of this numerous community, who seemed always recollected, and generally bathed in tears amidst his continual occupation, and asked him by what means he nourished so perfect a spirit of compunction, in the midst of such a dissipating laborious employment. He said, that, serving the monks, he represented to himself that he was serving not men, but God in his servants: and that the fire he always had before his eyes, reminded him of that fire which will burn souls for all eternity. The moving description which our author gives of the monastery of penitents called the Prison, above a mile from the former, hath been already abridged in our language. John the Sabaite told our saint, as of a third person, that seeing himself respected in his monastery, he considered that this was not the way to satisfy for his sins. Wherefore, with the leave of his abbot, he repaired to a severe monastery in Pontus, and after three years saw in a dream a schedule of his debts, to the amount in appearance of one hundred pounds of gold, of which only ten were cancelled. He therefore repeated often to himself: "Poor "Antiochus, thou hast still a great debt to satisfy." After passing other thirteen years in contempt and the most fervent practices of penance, he deserved to see in a vision his whole debt blotted out. Another monk, in a grievous fit of illness, fell into a trance, in which he lay as if he had been dead for the space of an hour: but recovering, he shut himself up in his cell, and lived a recluse twelve years, almost continually weeping, in the perpetual meditation of death. When he was near death, his brethren could only extort from him these words of edification: "He who hath death always be-"fore his eyes, will never sin." John, abbot of Raithu, explained this book of our saint by judicious comments, which are also extant. We have likewise a letter of St. John Climacus to the same person, concerning the duties of a pastor, in which he exhorts him in correcting others to temper seve-

rity with mildness, and encourages him zealously to fulfil the obligations of his charge; for nothing is greater or more acceptable to God than to offer him the sacrifice of rational souls sanctified by penance and charity.

St. John sighed continually under the weight of his dignity, during the four years that he governed the monks of Mount Sinai: and as he had taken upon him that burden with fear and reluctance, he with joy found means to resign the same a little before his death. Heavenly contemplation, and the continual exercise of divine love and praise, were his delight and comfort in his earthly pilgrimage: and in this imitation of the functions of the blessed spirits in heaven he placeth the essence of the monastic state.[6] In his excellent maxims concerning the gift of holy tears, the fruit of charity,[7] we seem to behold a lively portraiture of his most pure soul. He died in his hermitage, on the thirtieth day of March, in 605, being fourscore years old. His spiritual son George, who had succeeded him in the abbacy, earnestly begged of God that he might not be separated from his dear master and guide; and followed him by a happy death within a few days. On several Greek commentaries on St. John Climacus's ladder, see Montfaucon, Biblioth. Coisliana, p. 305, 306.

St. John Climacus, speaking of the excellence and the effects of charity, does it with a feeling and energy worthy of such a subject. "A mother," says he,[8] "feels less pleasure "when she folds within her arms the dear infant whom she "nourishes with her own milk, than the true child of charity "does, when united, as he incessantly is, to his God, and "folded as it were in the arms of his heavenly father—[9] Cha- "rity operates in some persons so as to carry them almost en- "tirely out of themselves. It illuminates others, and fills "them with such sentiments of joy, that they cannot help "crying out: *The Lord is my helper and my protector: in him "hath my heart confided, and I have been helped. And my flesh "hath flourished again, and with my will I will give praise to "him.*[10] This joy which they feel in their hearts, is reflected "on their countenances; and when once God has united, or, as

[6] Gr. 1.—[7] Gr. 7. 27. 30.—[8] Grad. 30. n. 12.—[9] Gr. 1. 14.—[10] Ps. xxvii.

"we may say, incorporated them with his charity, he displays "in their exterior, as in the reflection of a mirror, the bright- "ness and serenity of their souls: even as Moses, being ho- "noured with a sight of God, was encompassed round by his "glory." St. John Climacus composed the following prayer to obtain the gift of charity. "My God, I pretend to nothing "upon this earth, except to be so firmly united to you by "prayer, that to be separated from you may be impossible: let "others desire riches and glory: for my part, I desire but "one thing, and that is, to be inseparably united to you, and "to place in you alone all my hopes of happiness and repose."

ST. ZOZIMUS, BISHOP OF SYRACUSE,

Was successor to the holy bishop Peter; and faithfully discharged all the duties of a worthy pastor until his death, which happened in 660. His name is mentioned in the Roman and Sicilian Martyrologies. See the Bollandists and Baillet.

ST. REGULUS, OR RIEUL,

Who having converted the country of Senlis to the faith, about the same time that St. Dionysius preached in France, was made first bishop of Senlis, and died in peace in the midst of his flock. See the Bollandists and Tillem. t. 4. p. 719.

MARCH XXXI.

ST. BENJAMIN, DEACON, M.

From Theodoret, Hist. Eccles. l. 5. c. 39. &c.

A. D. 424.

Isdegerdes, son of Sapor III. put a stop to the cruel persecutions against the Christians in Persia, which had been begun by Sapor II. and the church had enjoyed twelve years peace in that kingdom, when, in 420, it was disturbed by the indiscreet zeal of one Abdas, a Christian bishop, who burned down the Pyræum, or temple of fire, the great divinity of the Persians. King Isdegerdes threatened to demolish all the churches of the Christians, unless he would rebuild it. Abdas had done ill in destroying the temple, but did well in refusing to rebuild it; for nothing can make it lawful to contribute to any act of idolatry, or to the building a temple, as Theodoret observes. Isdegerdes therefore demolished all the christian churches in Persia, put to death Abdas, and raised a general persecution against the church, which continued forty years with great fury. Isdegerdes died the year following, in 421. But his son and successor, Varanes, carried on the persecution with greater inhumanity. The very description which Theodoret, a cotemporary writer, and one that lived in the neighbourhood, gives of the cruelties he exercised on the Christians, strikes us with horror: some were flayed alive in different parts of the body, and suffered all kinds of torture that could be invented: others, being stuck all over with sharp reeds, were hauled and rolled about in that condition; others were tormented divers other ways, such as nothing but the most hellish malice was capable of suggesting. Amongst these glorious champions of Christ

was St. Benjamin, a deacon. The tyrant caused him to be beaten and imprisoned. He had lain a year in the dungeon, when an ambassador from the emperor obtained his enlargement, on condition he should never speak to any of the courtiers about religion. The ambassador passed his word in his behalf that he would not: but Benjamin, who was a minister of the gospel, declared, that he could not detain the truth in captivity, conscious to himself of the condemnation of the slothful servant for having hid his talent. He therefore neglected no opportunity of announcing Christ. The king, being informed that he still preached the faith in his kingdom, ordered him to be apprehended; but the martyr made no other reply to his threats than by putting this question to the king: What opinion he would have of any of his subjects who should renounce his allegiance to him, and join in war against him. The enraged tyrant caused reeds to be run in between the nails and the flesh both of his hands and feet, and the same to be thrust into other most tender parts, and drawn out again, and this to be frequently repeated with violence. He lastly ordered a knotty stake to be thrust into his bowels to rend and tear them, in which torment he expired in the year 424. The Roman Martyrology places his name on the thirty-first of March.

St. Ephrem, considering the heroic constancy of the martyrs, makes on them the following pious reflections: "The "wisdom of philosophers, and the eloquence of the greatest "orators, are dumb through amazement, when they con- "template the wonderful spectacle and glorious actions of "the martyrs: the tyrants and judges were not able to ex- "press their astonishment when they beheld the faith, the "constancy, and the cheerfulness of these holy champions. "What excuse shall we have in the dreadful day of judg- "ment! if we who have never been exposed to any cruel "persecutions, or to the violence of such torments, shall have "neglected the love of God and the care of a spiritual life? "No temptations, no torments, were able to draw them from "that love which they bore to God: but we, living in rest "and delights, refuse to love our most merciful and gracious

"Lord. What shall we do in that day of terror, when the "martyrs of Christ, standing with confidence near his throne, "shall shew the marks of their wounds? What shall we "then shew? Shall we present a lively faith? true charity "towards God? a perfect disengagement of our affections "from earthly things? souls freed from the tyranny of the "passions? silence and recollection? meekness? almsdeeds, "prayers poured forth with clean hearts? compunction, "watchings, tears? Happy shall he be whom such good "works shall attend. He will be the partner of the martyrs, "and, supported by the treasure of these virtues, shall appear "with equal confidence before Christ and his angels. We "entreat you, O most holy martyrs, who cheerfully suffered "most cruel torments for God our Saviour and his love, on "which account you are now most intimately and familiarly "united to him, that you pray to the Lord for us miserable "sinners, covered with filth, that he infuse into us the grace "of Christ, that it may enlighten our souls that we may love "him, &c." (1)

ST. ACACIUS, OR ACHATES, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH IN ASIA MINOR, C.

St. Acacius was bishop of Antioch, probably the town of that name in Phrygia, where the Marcionites were numerous. He was surnamed Agath-angel, or Good-angel, and extremely respected by the people for his sanctity. It was owing to his zeal that not one of his flock renounced Christ by sacrificing to idols during the persecution of Decius, a weakness which several of the Marcionite heretics had betrayed. Our saint himself made a glorious confession of his faith; of which the following relation, transcribed from the public register, is a voucher.

Martian, a man of consular dignity, arriving at Antioch, a small town of his government, ordered the bishop to be brought before him. His name was Acacius, and he was styled the buckler and refuge of that country for his universal

(1) St. Ephrem hom. in SS. martyres, t. 3. Op. Gr. & Lat. p. 251. ed. Vatic. an. 1746.

charity and episcopal zeal. Martian said to him: "As you "have the happiness to live under the Roman laws, you are "bound to love and honour our princes, who are our protec- "tors." Acacius answered: "Of all the subjects of the em- "pire, none love and honour the emperor more than the "Christians. We pray without intermission for his person, "and that it may please God to grant him long life, prospe- "rity, success, and all benedictions; that he may be endowed "by him with the spirit of justice and wisdom to govern his "people; that his reign be auspicious, and prosperous, "blessed with joy, peace, and plenty throughout all the pro- "vinces that obey him." Martian. "All this I commend; but "that the emperor may be the better convinced of your sub- "mission and fidelity, come now and offer him a sacrifice "with me." Acacius. "I have already told you, that I pray "to the great and true God for the emperor; but he ought "not to require a sacrifice from us, nor is there any due to "him or to any man whatsoever." Martian. "Tell us what "God you adore, that we may also pay him our offerings and "homages." Acacius. "I wish from my heart you did but "know him to your advantage." Martian. "Tell me his "name." Acacius. "He is called the God of Abraham, "of Isaac, and of Jacob." Martian. "Are these the names "of gods?" Acacius. "By no means, but of men to whom "the true God spoke; he is the only God, and he alone is "to be adored, feared, and loved." Martian. "What is "this God?" Acacius. "He is the most high Adonia, who "is seated above the cherubims and seraphims." Martian. "What is a seraph?" Acacius. "A ministering spirit of the "most high God, and one of the principal lords of the hea- "venly court." Martian. "What chimeras are these? Lay "aside these whims of invisible beings, and adore such gods "as you can see."

Acacius. "Tell me who are those gods to whom you would "have me sacrifice?" Martian. "Apollo, the saviour of "men, who preserves us from pestilence and famine, who "enlightens, preserves, and governs the universe." Acacius. "Do you mean that wretch that could not preserve his own

"life: who being in love with a young woman, (Daphne) "ran about distracted in pursuit of her, not knowing that he "was never to possess the object of his desires. It is there- "fore evident that he could not foresee things to come, since "he was in the dark as to his own fate: and as clear that he "could be no god, who was thus cheated by a creature. All "know likewise that he had a base passion for Hyacinth, a "beautiful boy, and was so awkward as to break the head of "that minion, the fond object of his criminal passion, with a "coit. Is not he also that god who, with Neptune, turned "mason, hired himself to a king (Laomedon of Troy) and "built the walls of a city? Would you oblige me to sacrifice "to such a divinity, or to Esculapius, thunderstruck by Jupi- "ter? or to Venus, whose life was infamous, and to a hun- "dred such monsters, to whom you offer sacrifice? No, "though my life itself depended on it, ought I to pay divine "honours to those whom I should blush to imitate, and of "whom I can entertain no other sentiments than those of "contempt and execration? You adore gods, the imitators "of whom you yourselves would punish." Martian. "It is "usual for you Christians to raise several calumnies against "our gods; for which reason I command you to come now "with me to a banquet in honour of Jupiter and Juno, and "acknowledge and perform what is due to their majesty." Acacius. "How can I sacrifice to a man whose sepulchre "is unquestionably in Crete? What! Is he risen again?" Martian. "You must either sacrifice or die." Acacius. "This "is the custom of the Dalmatian robbers; when they have "taken a passenger in a narrow way, they leave him no "other choice but to surrender his money or his life. But, "for my part, I declare to you that I fear nothing that you can "do to me. The laws punish adulterers, thieves, and mur- "derers. Were I guilty of any of those things, I should be the "first man to condemn myself. But if my whole crime be the "adoring of the true God, and I am on this account to be "put to death, it is no longer a law but an injustice." Mar- tian. "I have no order to judge but to counsel you to obey. "If you refuse, I know how to force you to a compliance."

Acacius. "I have a law which I will obey: this commands "me not to renounce my God. If you think yourself bound "to execute the orders of a man who in a little time hence "must leave the world, and his body become the food of "worms; much more strictly am I bound to obey the omni-"potent God, who is infinite and eternal, and who hath de-"clared: *Whoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny "before my Father.*"

Martian. "You now mention the error of your sect which "I have long desired to be informed of: you say then that "God hath a son?" Acacius. "Doubtless he hath one." Martian. "Who is this son of God?" Acacius." The Word "of truth and grace." Martian. "Is that his name?" Aca-cius. "You did not ask me his name, but what he is." Martian. "What then is his name?" Acacius. "*Jesus "Christ.*" Martian having inquired of the saint by what woman God had this son, he replied, that the divine genera-tion of the Word is of a different nature from human gene-ration, and proved it from the language the royal prophet makes use of in the forty-fourth psalm. Martian. "Is God "then corporeal?" Acacius. "He is known only to him-"self. We cannot describe him; he is invisible to us in this "mortal state, but we are sufficiently acquainted with his per "fections to confess and adore him." Martian. "If God hath "no body, how can he have a heart or mind?" Acacius. "Wisdom hath no dependence or necessary connexion with "an organized body. What hath body to do with under-"standing?" He then pressed him to sacrifice from the ex-ample of the Cataphrygians, or Montanists, and engage all under his care to do the same. Acacius replied: "It is not "me these people obey, but God. Let them hear me when "I advise them to what is right; but let them despise me, if "I offer them the contrary and endeavour to pervert them." Martian. "Give me all their names." Acacius. "They "are written in heaven, in God's invisible registers." Mar-tian. "Where are the magicians, your companions, and "the teachers of this cunningly devised error?" by which "he probably meant the priests. Acacius. "No one in the

"world abhors magic more than we Christians." Martian. "Magic is the new religion which you introduce." Acacius. "We destroy those gods whom you fear, though you made "them yourselves. We, on the contrary, fear not him whom "we have made with our hands, but him who created us, and "who is the Lord and Master of all nature; who loved us as "our good father, and redeemed us from death and hell as "the careful and affectionate shepherd of our souls." Martian. "Give the names I require, if you would avoid the tor-"ture." Acacius. "I am before the tribunal, and do you "ask me my name, and, not satisfied with that, you must "also know those of the other ministers? Do you hope to "conquer many; you, whom I alone am able thus to con-"found? If you desire to know our names, mine is Acacius. "If you would know more, they call me Agathangelus, and "my two companions are Piso, bishop of the Trojans, and "Menander, a priest. Do now what you please." Martian. "You shall remain in prison, till the emperor is acquainted "with what has passed on this subject, and sends his orders "concerning you."

The emperor Decius having read the interrogatory, recompensed Martian by making him governor of Pamphilia, but admired so much the prudence and constancy of Acacius, that he ordered him to be discharged, and suffered him to profess the christian religion.

This his glorious confession is dated on the twenty-ninth of March, and happened under Decius in 250, or 251. How long St. Acacius survived does not appear. The Greeks, Egyptians, and other oriental churches, honour his name on the thirty-first of March; though his name occurs not in the Roman Martyrology. See his authentic acts in Ruinart, p. 152. Tillemont, t. 2. p. 357. Fleury, t. 2. Ceillier, t. 3. p. 560.

ST. GUY, C.

He is called by the Germans Witen, and was forty years abbot of Pomposa, in the dutchy of Ferrara, in Italy, a man eminent in all virtues, especially patience, the love of soli-

tude and prayer. He died in 1046. The emperor, Henry III. caused his relicks to be translated to Spire, which city honours him as its principal patron. See his life, by a disciple in the Acta Sanctorum of Henschenius, and another, shorter, of the same age.

END OF VOL. III.

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